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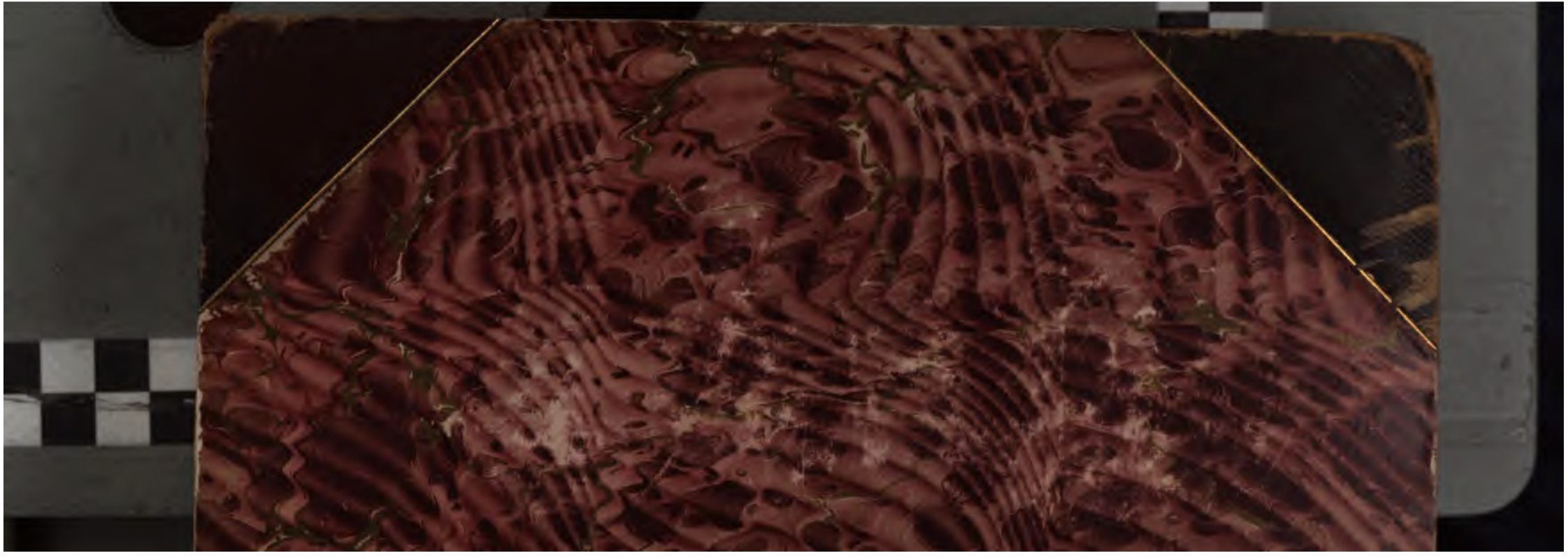
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MEMOIRS

OF

GOLDONI.

MEMOIRS

OF

GOLDONI,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF:

FORMING

A COMPLETE HISTORY

OF HIS

LIFE AND WRITINGS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH,

BY

JOHN BLACK.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

No comic writer since Moliere, has attained to *such* universal celebrity as Goldoni. Eighteen editions of his voluminous works were given to the world during the life-time of the author; selections from his comedies have been repeatedly published in almost every capital of Europe; and we learn from Lord Byron that some of them have even been translated into the dialects of modern Greece.

To give pleasure to nations differing widely from each other in manners and customs, in knowledge and civilization, is one of the most unquestionable tests of merit in a dramatic author. The comedy which pleases in one country and is not relished in others, may not on that account be bad; but the comedy which gives pleasure in all

countries we may at once pronounce to be good. The wit and humour must be genuine which can bear exportation.

The first literary characters of Europe have vied with each other in bearing testimony to the merits of Goldoni. By Voltaire, who uniformly expressed the most enthusiastic admiration of him, he was styled the *Painter of Nature*.—Lessing, when at the head of the literature of Germany, did not conceive it beneath him to translate from Goldoni. The astonishing fertility of his genius *(stupenda fecondità del ingegno)* was the admiration of Metastasio. A great and rising poet of our own country, Lord Byron, has pronounced that some of his comedies "are perhaps the best in Europe."

When we learn that Goldoni was the author of one hundred and fifty comedies, all of which have appeared in print, and that sixteen of the most excellent of them were written and acted in the course of one twelvemonth, we are lost in astonishment at his wonderful powers of invention. Dr. Johnson on the supposition that Dryden published six complete plays in one year, observes, that this "shews such facility of composition, such

readiness of language, and such copiousness of sentiment, as since the time of Lopez de Vega perhaps no other author has ever possessed."—It is now ascertained that Dryden never published more than three plays in one year; but had he even given six to the world, this bears no proportion to the fertility of Goldoni who produced a greater number every year of his dramatic life:—Those who have an acquaintance with Italian literature know that the Italian comedies are in general longer than either the French or the English.

"The Italians," says an elegant and ingenious French critic*, "consider Goldoni as having carried the dramatic art to its highest degree of perfection. We cannot in fact refuse him an uncommon degree of merit, a great fertility of invention which perpetually supplied him with new subjects of comedy, an extreme facility by which he was more than once enabled to finish a comedy of five acts in verse, in five days, a facility which sometimes seduced him, and prevented him from bestowing that finish on

* Sismondi,—in his "Litterature du Midi de l'Europe."

his comedies of which they were susceptible; a great vivacity in his dialogue, which is always true, animated, and to the purpose; a perfect knowledge of the manners of his countrymen, and the rare talent of exhibiting them faithfully on the stage; and the possession of the Italian gaiety, that is to say, the gaiety which paints folly and stupidity in diverting colours, and which inspires buffoonery. He is at present in the eyes of the Italians the sole monarch of the comic scene; and his pieces are always received with enthusiasm. I have a thousand times heard, during their representation, the exclamation of *Gran Goldoni* echoed from all parts of the theatre, though his eminent merit, his nature, his fidelity, and his gaiety do not exactly give the idea of *grandeur*."

While we allow the praise of greater profundity and keener wit to Moliere, we must at the same time own that Goldoni is infinitely more natural and more diverting and interesting. The plays of Moliere have been long represented to thin houses in France, while the Italian public seem never to be weary of Goldoni. The long speeches in the higher comedies of the Frenchman

must be more tedious on the stage than in the closet, and the farcical humour of his lighter pieces may once or twice produce a hearty laugh, but will not bear much repetition. When we consider too that Moliere is generally unhappy in his plots, we may easily conceive why he should be more praised than read, and more read than represented.

No man can hope to be a successful *comic* writer without an intimate knowledge of the world; and no one, as Dr. Johnson has observed, can know the world who has not sometimes been in want of a guinea. The life of a comic writer must therefore in general be a life of variety and adventure. We have a strong exemplification of this in the Memoirs of Goldoni, of which a translation is now for the first time given to the English public, and which were pronounced by Gibbon "to be more truly dramatic than his Italian comedies."

A work which has been often pronounced one of the best specimens of autobiography*, can hardly fail to meet with a favourable reception from the public. It is indeed asto-

* By Lord Byron, &c.

nishing when we consider the trash that is every day transplanted into our language, that no one has ever yet attempted to translate this highly amusing and instructive production, which introduces to our intimate acquaintance a man of genius of the most amiable character, which abounds with anecdotes of some of the most eminent men of the last century, which throws great light on the history of the Italian and French theatres, and which contains a more exact picture of modern Italian manners than is to be found perhaps in any other work extant.

These Memoirs come down to 1787, when Goldoni was in his eightieth year. He died at Paris in the beginning of 1793. Goldoni tells us that he was induced to leave Venice, and accept of an invitation to France, that in his old age he might have some security against want; but M. Sismondi informs us, (on what authority he does not specify,) that in consequence of the temporary success of Count Charles Gozzi, his rival, in 1761, Goldoni was so much hurt, that he for ever abandoned his language and his country.

PREFACE

BY

THE AUTHOR.

THE life of every author, good or bad, is at the head of his works, or in the memoirs of the time.

The life of a man, it is true, ought not to appear till after his death; but do these posterior portraits bear any resemblance to the originals? If they proceed from a friend, the language of praise is not always the language of truth; if from an enemy, satire is too often substituted for criticism.

My life is not interesting; but it may happen that some time hereafter a collection of my works may be found in the corner of some old library. This will perhaps excite a curiosity to know something of the singular man who undertook the reformation of the theatre of his country, who

gave to the stage and the press one hundred and fifty comedies of character and intrigue, in prose and in verse; and who saw eighteen editions of his theatre published during his own life-time. It will be undoubtedly said, "*This man must have been very rich; why did he quit his country?*" Alas! posterity must be informed that Goldoni found repose, tranquillity, and comfort only in France, and that he finished his career by a French comedy which had the good fortune to succeed on the theatre of that nation.

I thought that the author alone could give a certain and satisfactory idea of his character, his anecdotes, and his writings; and I imagined also, that by publishing the memoirs of his life in his own life-time, if their accuracy was not challenged by his contemporaries, his veracity might be relied on by posterity.

In consequence of this idea, when I saw in 1760, that after my first Florence edition, my theatre was the subject of universal pillage, that fifteen editions had been pub-

lished without my avowal, without my knowledge, and what is still worse, in a very incorrect state, I conceived the project of printing a second edition at my own expense, and inserting in each volume, instead of a preface, a part of my life, imagining at that time, that at the end of the work the history of my person and my theatre might be completed.

I was mistaken. When I began the octavo edition of Pasquali, with plates, at Venice, I could not have any idea that my destiny would lead me to cross the Alps.

On being called to France in 1761, I continned to furnish the changes and corrections which I had projected for the Venice edition; but the vortex of Paris, my new occupations and the distance between the two places, have diminished my activity and retarded the execution of the press to such a degree, that a work which was to extend to thirty volumes, and to be completed in eight years, is only at the expiration of twenty, at the seventeenth volume, and will never be finished in my life-time.

What at present agitates and urges me is the account of my life. I repeat, it is not interesting; but what I have hitherto given in the seventeen first volumes has been so well received, that I am induced to continue it, especially as what I have hitherto written has only a reference to my person, and what remains for me to say, relates to my theatre in particular, ~~that of the Italians~~ in general, and in part of that of the French which I have narrowly examined. The comparison of the manners and tastes of the two nations, and whatever I have seen and observed may perhaps be found agreeable, and even instructive to amateurs.

I am resolved therefore to labour as long as I can, and I do so with inexpressible pleasure, that I may the sooner have to speak of my dear Paris, which gave me so kind a reception, which has afforded me so much amusement, and where I have been so usefully occupied.

I begin by throwing together into French the contents of the historical prefaces of my seventeen volumes of Pasquali. This is an

abridgement of my life from my birth to the commencement of what in Italy is called the reformation of the Italian theatre. The public will see in what manner the comic genius, which has always controuled me, was announced, how it was developed, the useless efforts made to turn me from the cultivation of it, and the sacrifice made by me to the imperious idol which carried me along. This *will* form the first part of my Memoirs.

The second part will comprehend the history of all my pieces, an account of the circumstances which supplied me with the subject of them, the success or failure of my comedies, the rivalry excited by my success, the cabals which I treated with contempt, and the criticisms which I respected, the satires which I bore in silence, and the cavils of the actors which I surmounted. It will be seen that humanity is every where the same, that jealousy employs itself every where, and that every where a man of a cool and tranquil disposition, in the end, acquires the love of the public, and wearies out the perfidy of his enemies.

The third part of these Memoirs will contain my emigration into France. I am so enchanted with having an opportunity of speaking my mind freely on this subject, that I am almost tempted to begin my work with that period. But in every thing there ought to be method. I should have been perhaps obliged to retouch the two preceding parts, and I am not fond of going over what I have already done.

This is all that I had to say to my readers. I request them to read me, and to be so good as to yield me their belief; truth has always been my favourite virtue, I have always found my account in it; it has saved me from the necessity of studying falsehood, and the mortification of blushing.

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MEMOIRS OF GOLDONI.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

My Birth and Parentage—My first Journey—My Education—New Theatrical Amusement—Arrival of my Mother at Perugia.

I WAS born at Venice, in the year 1707, in a large and beautiful house between the bridges of *Nomboli* and *Donna Onesta*, at the corner of the street *Cà cent'anni*, in the parish of St. Thomas.

Julius Goldoni, my father, was born in the same city; but all his family were of Modena.

My grandfather, Charles Goldoni, went through his studies in the famous College of Parma. There he formed an acquaintance with two noble Venetians, which soon ripened into the most intimate friendship. They prevailed on him to follow them to Venice. His father being dead, he obtained permission from his uncle, who was a Colonel and Governor of Finale, to settle in the country of his

friends, where he obtained a very honourable and lucrative appointment in the office of the *Five Commercial Sages*, and where he married a Miss Barili of Modena, the daughter of one counsellor of state of the Duke of Parma, and the sister of another. This was my paternal grandmother.

On her death, my grandfather became acquainted with a respectable widow who had two daughters: he married the mother, and the eldest daughter was wedded to his son. They were of the Salvioni family, and, though not rich, were in easy circumstances. My mother was a pretty brunette, and though a little lame, was still very attractive. All their property came into the hands of my grandfather.

He was a worthy man, but by no means an economist. Fond of pleasure, the gay mode of life of the Venetians was well suited to his disposition. He took an elegant country-house, belonging to the Duke of *Massa-Carrara*, in the *Marca Trevigiana*, six leagues from Venice, where he lived in great splendour. The grandees of the neighbourhood could not brook the idea of Goldoni drawing all the villagers and strangers about him; and one of his neighbours made an attempt to deprive him of his house; but my grandfather went to Carrara, and took a lease of all the Duke's property in the Venetian territories. He returned quite proud of his victory, and lived more extravagantly than ever. He gave plays and operas, and had the best and

most celebrated actors and musicians at his command; and we had visitors from all quarters. Amidst this riot and luxury did I enter the world. Could I possibly contemn theatrical amusements, or not be a lover of gaiety?

My mother brought me into the world with little pain, and this increased her love for me; my first appearance was not, as usual, announced by cries, and this gentleness seemed then an indication of the pacific character, which from that day forward I have ever preserved.

I was the idol of the house: my nurse maintained that I was clever; my mother took the charge of my education, and my father of my amusement. He ordered a puppet-shew to be constructed for me, which he contrived to manage himself, with the assistance of three or four of his friends; and at the age of four, this was a high entertainment for me.

My grandfather died in 1712, of a defluxion in the chest, occasioned by his exertions in a party of pleasure, which in six days brought him to his grave. My grandmother soon followed him. This caused a terrible change in our family, which, from the most fortunate state of affluence, was all at once plunged into the most embarrassing mediocrity.

My father's education was not what it ought to have been; he was by no means destitute of abilities, but they had never been properly cultivated,

He could not retain his father's situation, which a crafty Greek contrived to get possession of.

The free property of Modena was sold, and the entailed mortgaged; and all that remained was the property of Venice, the fortunes of my mother and aunt.

To add to our misfortune, my mother gave birth to a second son, John Goldoni, my brother. My father found himself very much embarrassed; but as he was not over fond of indulging in melancholy reflections, he resolved on a journey to Rome to dispel his uneasiness. I shall relate in the following chapter what he did there, and what became of him. I must return to myself, for I am the hero of my own tale.

My mother was left alone at the head of the house, with her sister and her two children. She put the youngest out to board; and bestowing her whole attention on me, she determined on bringing me up under her own eye. I was mild, tranquil, and obedient: at the age of four, I could read and write, I knew my catechism by heart, and a tutor was procured for me.

I was very fond of books, and I learned with great facility my grammar, and the principles of geography and arithmetic; but my favourite reading was comedies. The small library of my father contained a tolerable number, and I employed almost all my leisure moments in reading them. I even copied the passages with which I was most

delighted. My mother gave herself no concern about the choice of my reading; it was enough that my time was not taken up with the usual playthings of children.

Among the comic authors whom I frequently read and re-read, Cicognini had the preference. This Florentine author, very little known in the republic of letters, was the author of several comedies of intrigue, full of whining pathos and common-place drollery: still, however, they were exceedingly interesting: for he possessed the art of keeping up a state of suspense, and he was successful in winding-up his plots. I was infinitely attached to him, studied him with great attention, and, at the age of eight, I had the presumption to compose a comedy.

The first person to whom I communicated this circumstance was my nurse, who thought it quite charming. My aunt laughed at me; my mother scolded and caressed me by turns; my tutor maintained that there was more wit and common sense in it than belonged to my age; but what was most singular, my godfather, a lawyer, richer in gold than in knowledge, could not be prevailed on to believe that it was my composition. He insisted that it had been revised and corrected by my tutor, who was quite shocked at the insinuation. The dispute was growing warm, when, luckily, a third person made his appearance, and instantly restored tranquillity.

This was M. Vallé, afterwards the Abbé Vallé of Bergamo. This friend of the family had seen me busied at my comedy, and had witnessed my puerilities and my little sallies. I had entreated him to speak to nobody on the subject: he had kept my secret; and on this occasion, he put my incredulous godfather to silence, and rendered justice to my good qualities.

In the first volume of my edition of Pasquali, I cited the Abbé Vallé, who was living in 1770, in confirmation of the truth of this anecdote, suspecting that there might be other godfathers not disposed to give me credit.

If the reader ask what was the title of my play, I cannot satisfy him, for this is a trifle I did not think of when composing it: it would be easy for me to invent one now; but I prefer giving a true statement of things to the embellishing them.

This comedy, in short, or rather this piece of infantine folly, was circulated amongst all my mother's acquaintance. A copy was sent off to my father; and this leads me again to speak of him.

My father was only to have remained a few months in Rome, but he stayed four years. In this great capital of the Christian world, there was an intimate friend of his, *M. Alexander Bonicelli*, a Venetian, who had lately married a Roman lady of great wealth, and who lived in great splendour.

M. Bonicelli gave his friend Goldoni a very warm reception: he received him into his house.

introduced him into all societies and to all his acquaintance, and recommended him powerfully to M. Lancisi, the first physician and secret *camériere* of Pope Clement XI. This celebrated doctor, by whom the republic of letters and the faculty have been enriched with excellent works, conceived a strong attachment for my father, who possessed talents, and who was looking out for employment.

Lancisi advised him to apply himself to medicine, and he promised him his favour, assistance, and protection. My father consented: he studied in the College *de la Sapienzia*, and served his apprenticeship in the Hospital *del Santo Spirito*. At the end of four years, he was created Doctor, and his Mecænas sent him to make his first experiments at Perugia.

My father's debût was exceedingly fortunate: he contrived to avoid those diseases with which he was unacquainted; he cured his patients; and the *Venetian Doctor* was quite in vogue in that country.

My father, who was perhaps a good physician, was also very agreeable in company; and to the natural amenity of his countrymen, he added an acquaintance with the usages of genteel company in the place which he had quitted. He acquired the esteem and the friendship of the *Baillони* and the *Antinori*, two of the most noble and wealthy families of the town of Perugia.

In this town, and thus happily situated, he re-

ceived the first specimen of his eldest son's abilities. Defective as this comedy must have been, he was infinitely flattered with it; for, calculating by the rules of arithmetic, if nine years gave four carats of talent, eighteen might give twelve; and, by regular progression, it was possible to arrive even at a degree of perfection.

My father determined on having me with himself. This was a sad blow for my mother, who at first resisted, then hesitated, and at last yielded. One of the most favourable opportunities occurred at this time. Our family was very intimate with that of Count Rinalducci de Rimini, who, with his wife and daughter, was then at Venice. The Abbé Rinalducci, a Benedictine father, and the Count's brother, was to set out for Rome; and he undertook to pass through Perugia, and to take the charge of me to that place.

Every thing was got ready, and the moment of departure arrived. I will not speak of the tears of my tender mother; those who have children well know what is suffered on such trying occasions. I was very warmly attached to her who had given me birth; who had reared and cherished me; but the idea of a journey is a charming consolation for a young man.

Father Rinalducci and myself embarked in the port of Venice, in a sort of *felucca*, called *peotazuecchina*, and we sailed for Rimini. I suffered nothing from the sea, I had even an excellent

appetite, and we landed at the mouth of the *Marecchia*, where horses were in readiness for us.

When a horse was brought to me, I was in the greatest possible embarrassment. At Venice no horses are to be seen in the streets; and though there are two academies, I was too young to derive any advantage from them. In my infancy I had seen horses in the country, but I was afraid of them, and did not dare to approach them.

The roads of Umbria, through which we had to pass, were mountainous, and a horse was the most convenient mode of conveyance for passengers; there was, therefore, no alternative. They laid hold of me by the middle, and threw me on the saddle.....Merciful heaven! Boots, stirrups, whip, and bridle! what was to be done with all these things? I was tossed about like a sack; the reverend father laughed very heartily at me, the servants ridiculed me, and I even laughed at myself. I became by degrees familiarized to my poney: I regaled it with bread and fruit, and in six days' time we arrived at Perugia.

My father was glad to see me, and still more glad to see me in good health. I told him, with an air of importance, that I had performed the journey on horseback; he smiled as he applauded me, and he embraced me affectionately.

The place where we were lodged was exceedingly dismal, and the street steep and dirty; I entreated my father to remove, but he could not,

as the house belonged to the Hotel or Palace *d'Antinori*; he paid no rent, and was quite near the nuns of St. Catharine, whose physician he was.

I now viewed the town of Perugia; my father conducted me every where himself; he began with the superb church of San Lorenzo, which is the cathedral of this country, where the *ring* with which *St. Joseph espoused the Virgin Mary is still preserved:* it is a stone of a transparent blueish colour, and very thick contour: so it appeared to me—but this ring, it is said, has the marvellous property of appearing under a different colour and form to every one who approaches it.

My father pointed out to me the citadel, built when Perugia was in the enjoyment of republican liberty, by orders of Paul the Third, under the pretext of a donation to the Perugians of an hospital for patients and pilgrims. He introduced pieces of cannon in carts loaded with straw, and the inhabitants soon found themselves obliged to *acknowledge Paul the Third.*

I saw fine palaces and churches, and agreeable walks: I asked whether there was a theatre, and I was told there was none; "So much the worse," said I, "I would not remain here for all the gold in the world!"

After passing a few days in this manner, my father determined that I should renew my studies; a very proper resolution which accorded with my own wishes. The Jesuits were then in vogue, and

on being proposed to them, I was received without difficulty.

The *Humanity-Classes* are not regulated here as in France; there are only three, *Under Grammar*, *Upper Grammar*, or *Humanity*, properly so called, and *Rhetoric*. Those who employ their time well may finish their course in the space of three years.

At Venice I had gone through the first year of under-grammar, and I might now have entered the upper, but the time which I had lost, the distraction occasioned by travelling, and the new masters under whom I was about to be placed, induced my father to make me recommence my studies; in which he acted very wisely, for you will soon see, my dear reader, how the vanity of the Venetian grammarian, who plumed himself on the composition of a play, was in an instant woefully mortified.

The literary season was well advanced, and I was received in the under-class as a scholar properly qualified for the upper. My answers to the questions put to me were incorrect; I hesitated in my translations; and the Latin which I attempted to make, was full of barbarisms and solecisms; in short, I became the derision of my companions, who took a pleasure in challenging me; and as every encounter with them ended in my defeat, my father was quite in despair, and I myself was astonished and mortified and believed myself bewitched.

The time of the holidays drew near, when we had to perform a task, which, in Italy, is called the *passage Latin;* for this little labour decides the fate of the scholar, whether he is to rise to a higher class, or continue to remain in the same.—The latter alternative was all that I had a right to expect.

The day came: the regent or rector dictated; the scholars wrote down; and every one exerted himself to the utmost. I strained every nerve, and figured to myself my honour and ambition at stake, and the concern of my father and mother; I saw my neighbours bestowing a side glance at me, and laughing at my endeavours: — *Facit indignatio versum.*—Rage and shame spurred me on and inspired me; I read my theme, I felt my head cool, my hand rapid, and my memory fresh; I finished before the rest, I sealed my paper, took it to the regent, and departed very well pleased with myself.

Eight days afterwards the scholars were collected together and called on; and the decision of the college was published. The first nomination was, *Goldoni to the upper;* on which, a general laugh burst out in the class, and many insulting observations were made. My translation was read aloud, in which there was not a single fault of orthography. The regent called me to the chair; I rose to go, I saw my father at the door, and I ran to embrace him.

The regent wished to speak to me in private;

he paid me several compliments, and told me, that notwithstanding the gross mistakes which I committed from time to time in my ordinary lessons, he had suspected that I was possessed of talents, from the favourable specimens he occasionally perceived in my themes and verses; he added, that this last essay convinced him that I had purposely concealed my talents, and he alluded jocularly to the tricks of the Venetians.

"You do me too great an honour, reverend father," said I to him: "I assure you I have suffered too much during the last three months to amuse myself at such an expence; I did not counterfeit ignorance, I was in reality what I seemed, and it is a phenomenon which I cannot explain."

The regent exhorted me to continue my application, and as he himself was to pass to the upper class to which I had gained a right of entrance, he assured me of his favour and good-will.

My father, who was perfectly satisfied with me, endeavoured to recompense and amuse me during the time of the vacation. He knew that I was fond of plays; he admired them also himself; he even collected a society of young people, and obtained the use of a hall in the Palace d'Antinori, where he constructed a small theatre; the actors were formed by himself, and we represented plays.

In the Pope's dominions (except the three legations) women are not allowed on the stage. I was young, and by no means ugly, and a female

character was allotted to me; I even got the first character, and was charged with the prologue.

This prologue was so singular a piece, that it has never gone out of my head, and I must treat my reader with it. In the last century the Italian literature was so corrupted, that both prose and poetry were turgid and bombastical; and metaphors, hyperboles, and antitheses supplied the place of common sense. This depraved taste was not altogether extirpated in 1720; and my father was accustomed to it. The following is the commencement of the precious composition which I was made to deliver:

Benignissimo Cielo! (I was addressing my auditors) *ai rai del vostro splendidissimo sole, eccoci qual farfalle, che spiegando le deboli ali de' nostri concetti, portiamo a si bel lume il volo,* &c. which, in plain English, signifies, *Most benign heaven, in the rays of your most resplendent sun, behold us like butterflies, who on the feeble wings of our expressions, take our flight to your admirable light,* &c.

This charming prologue procured me an immensity of sweetmeats with which the theatre was inundated and myself almost blinded. This is the usual expression of applause in the Pope's dominions.

The piece in which I acted, was *la Sorellina di don Pilone*; and I was highly applauded; for in a country where plays are rare, the spectators are not difficult to please.

My father said, that I seemed to comprehend my part, but that I should never be a good actor; and he was not mistaken.

We continued to act till the end of the holidays. I took my place at the opening of the classes; at the end of the year I passed to rhetoric; and I finished my course with the friendship and esteem of the Jesuits, who did me the honour to offer me a place in their society; an honour which I did not accept. During this period, great changes took place in our family. My mother could no longer bear the absence of her eldest son; and she entreated her husband either to return to Venice, or to permit her to join him. After many letters and many discussions, it was at length decided that Madam Goldoni, with her sister and her youngest son, should join the rest of the family; and this was immediately carried into execution.

My mother could not enjoy a single day of good health in Perugia, so much did the air of the country disagree with her. Born and brought up in the temperate climate of Venice, she could not bear the cold of the mountains. She suffered a great deal, and was almost at death's-door, but she was resolved to surmount the pains and dangers of her situation so long as she believed my residence in that town necessary, that the course of my studies, which were now so far advanced, might not be exposed to interruption.

When my course was finished, she prevailed

on my father to satisfy her, and he very willingly consented. The death of his protector, Antinori, had been productive of several disagreeable circumstances; the physicians of Perugia bore him little good-will, and this induced him the more readily to resolve on quitting the territory of Perugia, and approach the mouth of the Adriatic.



CHAP. II.

My Journey to Rimini—My Philosophy—My first Acquaintance with Actors—The Bark of the Players—My Mother's Surprise—Interesting Letter from my Father—Dialogue between my Father and me—My new Occupations—Youthful Trait.

In a few days the project was carried into execution. A carriage capable of holding four persons was purchased, and we had my brother into the bargain. We took the road of Spoleti, as the most commodious, and we arrived at Rimini, where the whole family of Count Rinalducci was assembled, and where we were received with transports of joy.

It was of the utmost consequence that my literary application should not be a second time interrupted. My father destined me for medicine, and I had to enter on the study of philosophy.

The Dominicans of Rimini enjoyed a great reputation for logic, the key to all the sciences, physical as well as speculative. Count Rinalducci introduced us to Professor *Candini*, and I was entrusted to his care.

As the count could not keep me in his own house, I was boarded with M. *Battaglini*, a merchant and banker, the friend and countryman of my father. Notwithstanding the remonstrances

and regrets of my mother, who would never willingly part from me, the whole family set out for Venice, where I could only join them when it might be thought proper to send for me.

They embarked for *Chiozza*, in a bark belonging to that place; and the wind being favourable, they arrived there in a very short time; but, on account of the fatigue of my mother, they were obliged to stop there for the sake of repose.

Chiozza is eight leagues from Venice, and built on piles like the capital. It is computed to contain forty thousand souls, all of the lower order—fishermen, sailors, and women who make a coarse lace, in which a considerable trade is carried on: there are very few individuals above the vulgar. Every person is ranged there in one of two classes—the *rich* or the *poor*; those who wear a *wig* and *cloak*, are the rich, and the others, who have only a *cap* and CAPOTTO, are the poor; and yet it frequently happens that the latter possess four times more wealth than the others.

This place agreed very well with my mother, the air of Chiozza corresponding with that of her native place. She was elegantly lodged, enjoyed an agreeable view, and a charming degree of freedom; her sister was complaisant, my brother was still an infant unable to speak, and my father, who had projects, communicated his reflections to his wife, by whom they were approved of.

"We must not return to Venice," said he,

"till we are in a situation to enable us to live without being burdensome to any one." It was necessary therefore that he should first go to Modena to arrange the family affairs. This was accordingly done. My father was now at Modena, my mother at Chiozza, and myself at Rimini.

I fell sick, and was seized with the small-pox, but of a very mild kind. *M. Battaglini* did not inform my parents till he saw me out of danger. It is impossible to be better taken care of and attended to than I was on this occasion.

I was hardly in a condition to go out, when my landlord, who was extremely attentive and zealous for my welfare, urged me to return to Father Candini.

I went very unwillingly: this professor, who was a man of great celebrity, wearied me dreadfully; he was mild, wise, and learned; he possessed great merit, but he was a Thomist in his soul, and could not deviate from his ordinary method; his scholastic circumlocutions appeared to me useless, and his *barbara* and *baralipton* ridiculous.—I wrote from his dictation; but, instead of going over my note books at home, I nourished my mind with a much more useful and agreeable philosophy; I read Plautus, Terence, Aristophanes, and the fragments of Menander.

It is true, I did not shine in our daily circles: but I had the address to persuade my companions that my indifference to the master's lessons pro-

ceeded neither from laziness nor stupid ignorance, but from being fatigued and disgusted with their length and inutility. There were many of them who thought on this subject like myself.

Modern philosophy had not then made the considerable progress which has been since witnessed; and it was at that time necessary (especially for ecclesiastics) to keep to the systems of Thomas or Scot, or the Peripatetic, or the mixed, the whole of which only wander from the philosophy of good sense.

I had great want of some agreeable amusement to relieve the *ennui* which overpowered me. I soon found an opportunity, of which I availed myself; and my readers will not be displeased perhaps to pass with me from the circles of philosophy to those of a company of comedians.

We had one at Rimini which appeared to me quite charming.—It was the first time I saw women on the stage; and I found that they ornamented the scene in the most attractive manner. Rimini is in the legation of Ravenna; women are admitted on the theatre, and we do not see there, as at Rome, men without beards or even the signs of them.

The first day or two, I went very modestly into the pit; but seeing young people like myself on the boards, I endeavoured also to get there, and succeeded without difficulty. I bestowed a side-glance on the ladies, who looked boldly at me. By-and-by I grew more familiar, and from one subject of

conversation to another, and from question to question, they learned that I was a Venetian. They were all country-people of my own, and I received compliments and caresses without number from them. The director or manager himself loaded me with kindness: he asked me to dine with him, and I went. The Reverend Father Candini was now entirely out of my head.

The comedians were on the point of finishing their engagement, and taking their departure; which was a most distressing circumstance for me. On a *Friday*, a day of relaxation for all Italy, the state of Venice excepted, we formed a rural party; all the company were with us, and the manager announced the departure for the following week; he had engaged the bark, which was to conduct them to Chiozza....." To Chiozza!" said I with a cry of surprise!—" Yes, sir, we are to go to Venice; but we shall stop fifteen or twenty days at Chiozza, to give a few representations in passing." " Ah! my mother is at Chiozza; how gladly would I see her!"—" Come along with us."—" Yes, yes," cried one and all; " with us, with us, in our bark; you will be very comfortable in it; it will cost you nothing; we shall play, laugh, sing, and amuse ourselves."—How could I resist such temptations? How could I lose so fine an opportunity? I accepted the invitation, and I began to prepare for my journey.

I opened the business to my landlord, but he opposed me warmly. As I insisted, however, he

communicated my project to Count Rinalducci, and I had every one against me.—I pretended to acquiesce, and I kept myself quiet. On the day fixed for the departure, I put two shirts and a night-cap into my pocket; I repaired to the port, was the first to enter the vessel, and concealed myself well under the prow. I had my inkhorn with me; I wrote an excuse to M. Battaglini; I told him I could not resist the desire of seeing my mother; I requested him to make a present of my clothes to the nurse who took care of me in my illness; and I told him that I was on the point of departure.—This was a fault, I own; I have committed others, and I shall own them in the same manner.

The players arrived.—"Where is M. Goldoni?" Goldoni then sallied out of his hiding-place; at which every one began to laugh. I was feasted and caressed. We set sail.—Adieu, Rimini.

My comedians were not Scarron's Company, but on the whole, they presented a very amusing *coup-d'œil.*

Twelve persons, actors as well as actresses, a prompter, a machinist, a store-keeper, eight domestics, four chambermaids, two nurses, children of every age, cats, dogs, monkeys, parrots, birds, pigeons, and a lamb;—it was another Noah's ark!

The bark was very large, and divided into a number of apartments. Every female had her little corner with curtains. An excellent bed was

fitted up for me beside the manager; and all of us were comfortable.

The steward, who was at the same time cook and butler, rung a little bell, which was our signal for breakfast. On this, we all assembled in a sort of saloon in the middle of the vessel above the chests, trunks, and packages. An oval table was covered with coffee, tea, milk, roast meat, water and wine.

The principal actress *(première amoureuse)* asked for soup. There was none. She was quite in a rage, and they had all the difficulty in the world to pacify her with a cup of chocolate. She was the ugliest and the most difficult to please of the whole.

After breakfast, play was proposed till dinner should be ready. I played *tresset* pretty well. It was the favourite game of my mother, from whom I learned it.

We were going to begin tresset and piquet, but a faro-table on deck drew every body towards it. The bank was more a matter of amusement than interest, and the director would not have suffered it on any other terms. We played, laughed, joked, and gave ourselves up to all manner of tricks till the bell summoned us to dinner.

Macaroni! Every one fell upon it, and three dishes were devoured. We had also alamode beef, cold fowl, a loin of veal, a desert, and excellent wine. What a charming dinner! No cheer like a good appetite.

We remained four hours at table; we played

on different instruments, and sung a great deal. The actress who played the waiting-maid, sang divinely. I considered her attentively; she produced a singular sensation in me. Alas! an adventure took place which interrupted the happiness of the society. A cat escaped from her cage, the favourite of the principal actress, who called on every one for assistance. She was briskly chaced, but being as wild as her mistress, she skipped, leaped about, and crept into every hole and corner. When she found herself at last rather warmly pursued, she climbed up the mast. Seeing the distress of Madam Clarice, a sailor sprang up after her, when the cat leaped into the sea, where she remained. Her mistress was in despair, she attempted to kill every animal within reach of her, and to throw her waiting-maid into the watery grave of her darling. We all took the part of the waiting-maid, and the quarrel became general. The manager made his appearance, laughed, rallied, and caressed the afflicted lady. She at last began herself to laugh, and the cat was forgotten.

But this is enough, and it would be abusing my reader's patience to detain him with trifles like these, which do not merit notice.

The wind was unfavourable, and we remained three days at sea; always with the same amusements, the same pleasures, and the same appetite. We arrived on the fourth day at Chiozza.

I had not the address of my mother's lodgings, but I had not long to enquire—Madam Goldoni

and her sister wore a head-dress; they were in the rich class, and known by every body.

I requested the manager to accompany me; he very readily consented, and announced himself on his arrival. I remained in the anti-chamber. "Madam," said he to my mother, "I come from Rimini; I have news from your son."—"How does my son?"—"Very well, madam."—"Is he content with his situation?"—"Not remarkably so, madam; he suffers a great deal."—"From what?"—"From being so far from his tender mother."—"Poor child! I wish I had him beside me." (All this was heard by me, and my heart beat within me.) "Madam," continued the manager, "I offered to bring him with me."—"Why then did you not?"—"Would you have been pleased?"—"Undoubtedly."—"But his studies?"—"His studies! Could he not return? Besides, masters are every where to be had."—"Then you would willingly see him?"—"With the greatest joy."—"Here he is then, madam."

On this, he opened the door, and I made my entrance: I threw myself at my mother's feet, who cordially embraced me; neither of us could speak for our tears. The actor, accustomed to scenes of this nature, after passing some agreeable compliments, took his leave of my mother, and departed; I remained with her, and frankly owned the folly I had committed; she scolded me one moment, and caressed me the next, and we were quite pleased with each other. My aunt was then

out; on her entrance, we had a repetition of the same surprise and the same caresses. My brother was at that time boarded out.

On the day after my arrival, my mother received a letter from M. Battaglini at Rimini, who communicated to her my prank, of which he complained bitterly, and informed her that she would soon receive a portmanteau, containing my books, linen, and other articles, which my nurse knew not what to do with.

My mother was very uneasy, and disposed to scold me; but *a propos* of letters, she remembered that she had received a very interesting one from my father; she went to look for it, and put it into my hands: the following is the substance of it.

"My dear wife, *Pavia, March* 17, 1721.

"I HAVE news for you concerning our dear son, which will give you great pleasure. I quitted Modena, as you know, to go to Piacenza, for the sake of arranging affairs with my cousin, M. Barilli, who still owes me a part of my mother's fortune; and if I can join this sum to the arrears which I have just received at Modena, we shall be able to settle ourselves comfortably.

"My cousin was not at Piacenza; he had set out to Pavia, to be present at the marriage of a nephew of his wife. As the journey was not long, I resolved on joining him at Pavia. I found him, spoke to him, he owned the debt, and matters are arranged. He is to pay me in six years; but

you shall hear what has happened to me in this town.

"On alighting at the Hotel of the Red Cross, I was asked my name, for the purpose of having it entered at the Police. Next day, the landlord introduced a servant of the governor's to me, who very politely asked me to repair, at my convenience, to the Government-Palace. Notwithstanding the word *convenience*, I was far from being at my ease at that moment, and I was quite at a loss to conjecture what they could possibly want with me.

"I went first to my cousin, and after our affairs were settled, I spoke to him of this sort of invitation, which disquieted me a great deal, and I asked him whether he was personally acquainted with the Governor of Pavia? He told me he was, that he had known him a long time, that he was the Marquis of *Goldoni-Vidoni*, of a good family of Cremona, and a senator of Milan.

"At the name of Goldoni, I banished every fear; I conceived the most flattering ideas, and I was not deceived.

"I went to see him in the afternoon; he received me in the most respectful and gracious manner. It was my signature which had inspired him with the desire of knowing me. We talked a great deal; I told him that I was originally from Modena: he did me the honour of observing that the town of Cremona was not very distant from Modena. People came in, and he asked me to dine with him next day.

"I did not fail to go, as you may well believe; there were four of us at table, and we had a very good dinner. The two other guests left us after coffee, and the senator and myself were left by ourselves.

"We spoke of a number of things, but principally of my family, my situation, and my actual circumstances; in short, he promised to do something for my eldest son.

"At Pavia there is a university as famous as that of Padua, and several colleges, where those who have exhibitions are alone received. The marquis engaged to obtain for me one of those exhibitions in the Pope's college; and if Charles behaves himself, he will take care of him.

"Write nothing of this to my son. At my return I shall send for him. I wish to have the pleasure of informing him of it myself.

"I shall not be long I hope, &c."

The contents of this letter were quite calculated to flatter me, and inspire me with the most unbounded hopes.

I then felt all the imprudence of my proceeding. I dreaded my father's indignation, and I was afraid lest he should be inclined to distrust my conduct in a town still more distant, and where I should be much more at liberty.

My mother informed me that she would endeavour to screen me from my father's reproaches,—

that she would take every thing on herself, particularly as my repentance appeared sincere.

I was reasonable enough in fact for my age; but I was apt to act inconsiderately at times. This has done me much injury as the reader will see, and perhaps he will sometimes be inclined to pity me.

My mother wished to introduce me to her acquaintance; but my only dress consisted of an old surtout, which at sea had served me for dress, night gown, and a covering for my feet.

She ordered a tailor, and I was soon properly equipped, and in a state to make my appearance abroad.

My first care was to call on my travelling companions, who were very glad to see me. They were engaged for twenty representations; and as I received a right of admission, I resolved to take advantage of it with the good pleasure of my affectionate mother.

She was very intimate with the Abbé *Gennari*, a canon of the cathedral. This good ecclesiastic was rather a rigorist. Plays in Italy are not proscribed by the Roman church, and players are not excommunicated; but the Abbé Gennari maintained that the comedies which were then acted were dangerous for youth, in which he was probably not much in the wrong. My mother therefore forbid me the theatre.

I was obliged to obey; but though I did not go to the representations, I visited the actors, and the actress who performed the part of the waiting maid

more frequently than the others. I have always continued to have a predilection for those who act that character.

In six days my father arrived—I trembled all over: my mother concealed me in her dressing-closet, and took the rest on herself. My father ascended the steps; my mother ran to meet him: my aunt did the same, and the usual embraces took place. My father appeared chagrined and thoughtful, and he had not his usual gaiety. They supposed him fatigued.

On entering the room, my father's first words were, "Where is my son?" My mother answered with perfect sincerity "Our youngest son is boarded out." "No, no," replied my father, in a rage, "I want the eldest, and he must be here. In concealing him from me, you are doing very wrong, he must be corrected for his misconduct." My mother was quite at a loss what to do or say: she uttered vaguely, "but ..... how?"—My father interrupted her, stamping with his feet: "Yes, I have been informed of every thing by M. Battaglini, who wrote to me at Modena, and I found the letter in passing through it." My mother entreated of him, with an afflicted air, to hear me before condemning me. My father still in a rage, asked again where I was? I could contain myself no longer, I opened the glass door, but I durst not advance. "Go out," said my father to his wife and sister, "leave me alone with this profligate." When they were gone, I came forward

trembling; "Ah father!"—"How, sir! How do you happen to be here?"—"Father, ... you have been told"—"Yes, I have been told, that in spite of remonstrances and good advice, and in opposition to every one, you have had the insolence to quit Rimini abruptly."—"What should I have done at Rimini, father?—it was lost time for me."—"How, lost time! Is the study of Philosophy lost time?"—"Ah! the *scholastic Philosophy*, the *syllogisms*, the *enthymemas*, the *sophisms*, the *negas probos* and *concedos*; Do you remember them, father?" (He could not avoid displaying a slight movement of the lips which indicated his desire to laugh; I was shrewd enough to perceive it, and I took courage,)—"Ah father!" I added, "teach me the philosophy of man, sound moral philosophy, and experimental natural philosophy." "Come, come; how did you arrive here?"—"By sea."—"With whom?"—"With a company of players."—"Players!"—"They are very respectable people, father."—"What is the name of the manager?"—"He is Florindo on the stage, and they call him Florindo de' Maccaroni."—"O, I know him; he is a worthy man: he acted Don Giovanni in the *Festino di Pietra*; he thought proper to eat the maccaroni belonging to Harlequin, and that is the way he came by that surname."—"I assure you, father, that this company" ..... "Where is the company gone to?"—"It is here."—"Here?"—"Yes, father."—"Do they act here?"—"Yes, father."—"I shall go to see

them."—"And I also, father?"—"You! rascal! What is the name of the principal actress?"—"Clarice."—"O, Clarice! ..... excellent, ugly, but very clever."—"Father,"—"I must go to thank them."—"And I, father?"—"Wretch!"—"I beg your pardon."—"Well, well, for this time" .....

My mother, who had heard every thing, now entered; she was very glad to see me on good terms with my father.

She mentioned the Abbé Gennari to him, not with the view of preventing me from going to the play, (for my father was as fond of it as myself;) but for the sake of informing him that the canon, suffering under different diseases, was anxious to see him; that he had spoken to the whole town of the famous Venetian physician, pupil of the great *Lancisi*, who was instantly expected; and that he had only to shew himself to receive more patients than he could desire.

This was what really happened. Every body wished to have Dr. Goldoni; rich and poor flocked to him, and the poor paid better than the rich.

He took more commodious apartments, and settled at Chiozza, to remain there so long as fortune should continue favourable to him, or till some other physician in vogue should supplant him.

Seeing me unoccupied, and in want of good masters in the town, my father wished himself to make something of me.

He destined me for medicine, and till he

should have the letters announcing my nomination to the college of Pavia, he ordered me to accompany him in his daily visits. He thought that a little practice before the study of the theory would give me a superficial acquaintance with medicine, which I might find very useful for the understanding technical terms and the first principles of the art.

I was not over fond of medicine; but I durst not be refractory; for I should have been then told, that I wished to do neither one thing nor another.

I therefore followed my father, and saw the greatest number of his patients along with him. I felt their pulse, I looked at their urine, I examined their saliva, and did many other things equally disgusting to me. Patience: so long as the company continued their representations, which were prolonged to thirty-six, I thought myself indemnified.

My father was very well satisfied with me, and my mother still more so. But *one of the three enemies of man*, perhaps two, or all the three together, began to attack me, and disturb my tranquillity.

My father was sent for to a very young and a very pretty female patient, and he took me with him, not suspecting the nature of the disease. When he saw the necessity of making local investigations and observations, he ordered me out; and

from that day forward, whenever he entered the young lady's room, I was condemned to wait in a very small and dreary parlour.

The mother of the young patient, a very polite and kind woman, would not allow me to remain alone, but came and kept me company, and perpetually spoke to me of her daughter.

Thanks to the skill and care of my father, her child was soon out of danger; she got quite well, and the visit of this day was to be the last.

I complimented her on it: I thanked her for her complaisance to me, and I concluded by saying, if I have not the honor of seeing you again, ... "How," said she, "shall we not see you again?"—"If my father does not come,"—"You can come, however."—"What to do?"—"What to do! Harkee; my daughter is well,—she no longer stands in need of the doctor; but I should not be sorry that you had time to pay a friendly visit to see ..... if things go well ..... if she should want ..... to be purged .....; if you have nothing better to do, come occasionally I beg of you."—"But would the young lady wish me?"—"Ah, my dear friend, don't speak of that; my daughter has seen you, and she wishes for nothing more than to form an acquaintance with you."—"It is a high honour, madam; but if my father should come to know?"—"He will not know; besides, my daughter is his patient, and he cannot take it amiss that his son should come to see her."

—"But why would he not allow me to enter her room?"—"Because ..... the room is small, and it is very hot."—"I hear people stirring; my father is coming out, I believe."—"Well come and see us."—"When?"—"This evening, if you please."—"If I can."—"My daughter will be enchanted."—"And I also."—

My father made his appearance, and we went out together. The whole day I thought and reflected on this business, and every moment I changed my opinion. When evening came, my father went to a consultation, and at night-fall I repaired to the door of my recovered patient.

I entered; a great deal of politeness and pretty attentions were shewn me; I was offered refreshments, I refused nothing. The cupboard was examined—there was no more wine, and it was necessary to go out for some. As I put my hand into my pocket, a knock was heard. On opening, my father's servant entered! He had seen me go in, and he knew the gang. My guardian angel must have sent him. He whispered in my ear; I recollected myself and instantly departed.

CHAP. III.

My Departure for Venice—View of that City—My Installation in the House of an Attorney—My Departure for Pavia—My Arrival at Milan—First Interview with the Marquis Goldoni—Difficulties surmounted—My Installation into the College—My Dissipation.

Recovered from the blindness into which the effervescence of youth had plunged me, I looked with horror on the danger from which I had escaped.

I was naturally gay, but subject from my infancy to hypochondriacal or melancholy vapours, which threw a dark shade over my mind.

Attacked with a violent fit of this lethargic disease, I sought for relief, but could find none. The players were gone; Chiozza had no longer any amusement to my taste; I was discontented with medicine, I became gloomy and thoughtful, and fell away more and more every day.

My parents soon perceived my state; and my mother was the first to question me. I confided my uneasiness to her.

One day, when we were partaking of a family dinner without strangers, or the presence of servants, my mother turned the conversation to me. There was a debate of two hours. My father was

absolutely resolved that I should apply to medicine. It was in vain for me to agitate myself, make wry faces, and look gloomy, he would not yield. My mother at length proved to my father that he was wrong, and she did it in this way—

"The Marquis of Goldoni," said she, "wishes to take our child under his care. If Charles be a good physician, his protector may favour him, it is true; but can he give him patients? Can he persuade people to prefer him to so many others? He may procure him the place of Professor in the University of Pavia; but then, what an immense time and labour before he can get it;—whereas if my son were to study law and become an advocate, it would be easy for a senator of Milan to make his fortune, without the smallest trouble or difficulty."

My father made no answer; he remained silent for a few minutes. At length, turning to me, he said jocularly: "Would you like the *Code* and *Digest* of Justinian?"—"Yes, father," I replied, "a great deal better than the Aphorisms of Hippocrates."—"Your mother," said he, "is a sensible woman; her reasons are good, and I may acquiesce in them; but in the mean time you must not remain idle, but continue to accompany me."

I was still therefore where I was. My mother then took up my cause with warmth. She advised my father to send me to Venice, and settle me with my uncle *Indric*, one of the best attorneys of the

capital, and she proposed to accompany me herself, and to remain with me there till my departure for Pavia. My aunt supported her sister's project. I held up my hands and wept for joy. My father consented and I was to go instantly to Venice.

I was now contented, and my vapours were immediately dissipated. Four days afterwards, my mother and myself took our departure. We had but a passage of eight leagues, and we arrived at Venice at the hour of dinner. We went to lodge with *M. Bertani*, a maternel uncle of my mother; and next day we called on *M. Indric*, by whom we were very politely received. *M. Paul Indric* had married my paternal aunt. It was a charming family: a good husband and father, a good mother and wife, and children excellently brought up. I was entered in the office. I was the fourth clerk, but I enjoyed certain privileges which my consanguinity could not fail to procure me.

My present occupation was more agreeable than that under my father at Chiozza: but the one seemed as useless to me as the other.

Supposing that I should be called to the bar at Milan, I could derive no advantage from the practice of that at Venice, which is unknown to all the rest of Italy. It was impossible to foresee that by a series of singular adventures, I should one day plead in the courts where I then considered myself a stranger.

Discharging my duty with accuracy, and merit-

ing my uncle's praise, I contrived nevertheless to avail myself of the pleasures of a residence in Venice, and to partake of its amusements. It was my native place; but I was too young when I quitted it to know any thing of it again.

Venice is so extraordinary a city, that it is impossible to form a correct idea of it without seeing it. Maps, plans, models, and descriptions, are insufficient; it must be seen. All other cities bear more or less resemblance to one another, but Venice resembles none; and every time I have seen it after a long absence, it has been a new subject of astonishment and surprise for me.—As I advanced in years, and my knowledge increased and furnished me with more numerous objects of comparison, I ever discovered new singularities and new beauties in it.

But I then saw it as a youth of fifteen, who could not be supposed to be struck with what in reality was the most remarkable, and who could only compare it with the small towns which he had lived in. What I was most astonished at was the surprising view which it presents on a first approach. —On seeing the extent of small islands so close together and so admirably connected by bridges, we imagine we behold a continent elevated on a plain, and washed on every side by an immense sea which surrounds it.

This is not the sea, but a very extensive marsh more or less covered with water, at the mouth of

several ports, with deep canals which admit large and small vessels into the town and its environs.

If you enter by the quarter of Saint-Mark through a prodigious quantity of vessels of every description, ships of war, merchantmen, frigates, galleys, barks, boats, and gondolas, you land at *the Piazzetta* (small place) where in one direction you see the palace and the ducal church, which announce the magnificence of the republic, and in another, the place or square of Saint Mark, surrounded with porticos from designs by *Palladio* and *Sansovino*.

In going through the streets where haberdashery goods are sold, you tread on flags of Istrian marble, carefully roughened by the chissel to prevent their being slippery.—The whole quarter is a perpetual fair till you arrive at the bridge of a single arch, ninety feet in breadth, over the great canal, which, from its elevation, allows the passage of barks and boats in the highest tides, which offers three different roads to passengers, and which upholds twenty-four ships with lodgings, the roofs of which are covered with lead.

This view, I own, appeared surprising to me; and I have not found it properly described by travellers. I ask my reader's pardon if my fondness has got the better of me.

I shall not say more at present; but I shall take the liberty of giving some idea of the manners and customs of Venice, its laws and constitution, when

circumstances shall lead me to the subject, and when my knowledge may be supposed to have obtained more consistency and precision. I shall conclude this chapter with a succinct account of its spectacles.

In Italy, their places of public amusement are called theatres. There are seven in Venice, each bearing the name of the titular church of its parish. The theatre of Saint John Chrysostom was then the first in the town, where the grand operas were represented, where Metastasio opened his dramatical, and Farinello, Faustine, and Cozzoni their musical career. At present, the theatre of Saint Benedict is highest in rank. The six other theatres are called *Saint Samuel, Saint Luke, St. Angelo, St. Cassian, and St. Moses.* Of these seven, two are generally dedicated to grand operas, two to comic operas, and three to plays. I shall advert more particularly to all of them when I become an author, in the manner of that country; for there are none of them which have not had works of mine, and which have not contributed both to my honor and profit.

I acquitted myself tolerably well in my employment with the attorney at Venice. I possessed great facility in giving a summary and abstract of a law suit, and my uncle would fain have kept me, but I was recalled by a letter from my father.

The situation in the Pope's college had become vacant, and was kept open for me. The Marquis

of Goldoni communicated the circumstance to us, and advised us to lose no time in setting out.

My mother and myself quitted Venice, and returned to Chiozza. My trunks were ready and corded, my mother and my aunt in tears. My brother who had been taken home wished to accompany me. The separation was highly pathetic; but the chaise arrived and we were obliged to part.

We took the road of Rovigo and Ferrara, and arrived at Modena, where we remained three days in the house of *M. Zuvarisi*, a very respectable notary in that town, and a near relation of ours by the mother's side.

This worthy man had all my father's affairs in hand. He drew our Government annuities and our house rents, and having supplied us with money, we went to Piacenza.

My father, when there, took care to visit his cousin Barilli, who had not altogether fulfilled his engagements. He contrived to make him discharge the arrears of the two years which were owing, so that we were now tolerably well stocked with ready money, which turned out very useful to us in the unforeseen circumstances in which we were afterwards placed.

On arriving at Milan, we lodged at the inn of the Three Kings, and the day following we went to pay our visit to the Marquis Goldoni.

It is impossible to be better received than we were. My protector seemed satisfied with me, and

I was perfectly so with him. The college was spoken of, and the day was even fixed for my making my appearance in Pavia; but the marquis on looking more attentively at me, asked my father and myself why I was in a lay dress, and why I did not wear the clerical band *(petit collet)*.

We were quite at a loss to know what he meant. At length we learned for the first time that to enter the college of *Ghislieri*, called the Pope's college, it was essentially necessary, first, that those who held exhibitions should be tonsured; secondly, that they should have a certificate of their civil situation and their moral conduct; thirdly, another certificate of their not being married; and fourthly, a certificate of baptism.

My father and myself were quite thunderstruck, for all this was new to us. The Senator conceived that we ought to have been informed of it, for he had instructed his secretary to transmit us a note on the subject; but this note was still remaining in his bureau. This occasioned a number of excuses and a number of entreaties for pardon on the part of the secretary. The master was kind, and we should have gained nothing in being cross.

But it was necessary to remedy the mistake.—My father resolved to write to his wife. She went immediately to Venice, and set on foot every species of solicitation. The certificates of celibacy and good morals were easily procured, and the baptismal certificate still more so; but the great embarrass-

ment was the tonsure, as the Patriarch of Venice would not grant dimissorial letters without the constitution of the patrimony ordained by the canons of the church. What was to be done? The property of my father was not situated in the Venetian dominions, and my mother's was entailed. We were obliged to apply to the Senate for a dispensation.—What delays, contradictions, and loss of time! The senatorial secretary made us pay dear for his excuses and his blunders. There was nothing but patience for us. My mother gave herself a deal of trouble, and she was at length successful; but while she was labouring for her son at Venice, what were we about at Milan?

We remained fifteen days at Milan, dining and supping every day with my protector, who shewed us every thing magnificent in that city, which is the capital of Austrian Lombardy. I shall say nothing at present of Milan. I have to return to it; and I shall speak more at large concerning it, when I shall be more qualified to handle the subject.

In the mean time my costume was changed, and I wore the clerical band. We set out at length for Pavia, well provided with letters of recommendation. We lodged and boarded in the house of one of the town's people, and I was introduced to the superior of the college where I was to be received.

We had a letter from Senator Goldoni for *M. Lauzio*, professor of law; who himself conducted

me to the university. I followed him into his class, and did not lose my time waiting for my title of collegian.

M. Lauzio was a jurisconsult of the greatest merit. He possessed a very rich library, to which I had free access as well as to his table. His wife was very kind to me. She was still young enough, and must have been pretty, but she was terribly disfigured by a monstrous *goitre* which descended from her chin to her breast. These ornaments are by no means rare at Milan and Bergamo; but that of Madam Lauzio was altogether particular in its kind, for it had a small family of little goitres around it. The small-pox is certainly a great scourge for women; but I know no young woman pitted with the small-pox who would exchange her scars for a Milanese goitre.

I derived great profit from the professor's library. I run over the institutes of Roman law, and furnished my head with the matters for which I was destined.

I did not always confine myself to jurisprudence: There were shelves filled with a collection of antient and modern comedies, which were my favourite reading. I resolved to divide my time between the study of law and the perusal of comedies during the whole period of my stay at Pavia; but my entry into the college was the occasion of more dissipation than application; and I did well to profit by

the three months in which I waited for my dimissorial letters and certificates from Venice.

I re-read with more knowledge and greater pleasure the Greek and Latin poets, and I said to myself, I wish it were in my power to imitate them in their plans, their stile and their precision; but I should not be well pleased if I did not throw more interest into my works, more marked characters, more of the *vis comica*, and bring about a more successful termination of the plot.

Facile inventis addere.

We ought to respect the great masters who have paved the way for us in science and art; but every age has its peculiar genius, and every climate its national taste. The Greek and Roman authors were acquainted with nature, and closely copied her; but they exposed her unveiled and without restraint.

It was on this account that the fathers of the church wrote against plays, and that the Popes excommunicated them. They have been corrected by decency, and the anathema has been recalled in Italy. It deserves much more to be recalled in France; and that it is not so is a phenomenon which I cannot comprehend.

Rummaging about in this library, I saw English, Spanish, and French theatres; but I found no Italian theatre.

There were here and there old Italian pieces,

but no collection which could do honour to Italy.

It was with pain I saw that the nation, which was acquainted with the dramatic art before every other in modern times, was deficient in something essential. I could not conceive how Italy had in this respect grown negligent, vulgar, and degenerated. I passionately desired to see my country rise to the level of others, and I vowed to endeavour to contribute to it.

But I now received a letter from Venice, with the dismissorials, certificates, and baptismal extract. The latter was on the point of plunging us into a new embarrassment.

I was two years under the age requisite for my reception into the college. I know not to what saint I was beholden for the miracle; but I do know well, that I went to bed one night only sixteen, and rose next morning two years older!

My mother had address enough to remedy the want of *patrimony* necessary to obtain the dimissorial letters from the Patriarch of Venice: they were ordered to be issued by M. Cavanis, a secretary of the Senate, on the condition, that if I embraced the ecclesiastical state, a revenue should be constituted in my favour.

I received then the tonsure from the hands of Cardinal *Cusani*, Archbishop of Pavia; and I went with my father on leaving his Eminence's chapel, to present myself in the college.

The superior, called *Prefect*, was the Abbé *Bernerio*, Professor of Canon law in the university, and Apostolical Protonotary, and in virtue of a Bull of Pius V. he enjoyed the title of Prelate, immediately subject to the holy seat.

I was received by the *Prefect*, *Vice-Prefect* and *Almoner*.—They delivered to me a short sermon, and introduced me to the oldest of the scholars. I was then installed. My father embraced and quitted me, and next day he took the road for Milan on his way home.

Perhaps, my dear reader, I abuse your complaisance too much, in taking up your time with trifles, which can but little interest or amuse you; but I have a strong desire to mention this college to you where I ought to have made my fortune, and where I met with a sad reverse.—I wish to avow my errors, and to prove to you at the same time that at my age, and in my situation, the utmost virtue was requisite to avoid them. Listen to me with patience.

We were very well fed and lodged in this college; we had liberty to go out to the university, and we went where we pleased. The regulation allowed two to go out together, who were also to return together. We separated at the first turning, after appointing a rendezvous for our return, and when we returned alone, the porter took his money and said nothing.—His place was worth that of the porter of a minister of state.

We were as elegantly dressed as the Abbés who figure away in the world; English cloth, French silk, embroidery, lace, with a sort of robe-de-chambre without sleeves above the coat, and a velvet stole fastened to the left shoulder with the *Ghislieri* arms embroidered in gold and silver, surmounted by the Pontifical tiara, and the keys of St. Peter.—This robe, called *sovrana*; which is the device of the college, gives an air of importance to the wearer very well calculated to inspire a young man with a high idea of himself. Our college was not, as you may perceive, a community of boys. We acted precisely as we pleased. There was a great deal of dissipation within, and a great deal of freedom without. I learned there fencing, dancing, music, and drawing; and I learned also all possible games of commerce and chance. The latter were prohibited, but they were not the less played, and that of *Primero* cost me dear.

On going out, we looked at the university at a distance, and contrived to find our way into the most agreeable houses.—Hence the collegians at Pavia are viewed by the town's people in the light of officers in garrison towns; they are detested by the men and received by the women.

My Venetian jargon was agreeable to the ladies, and gave me some advantage over my comrades; my age and figure were not unpleasing, and my couplets and songs were by no means ill relished. Was it my fault that I did not employ my time

well? Yes: for among the forty which our number consisted of, there were several wise and considerate individuals, whom I ought to have imitated; but I was only sixteen, I was gay, weak, fond of pleasure, and I yielded to seduction. But enough for my first year of college; the holidays are approaching; they begin about the end of June, and terminate with October.



CHAP. IV.

My first Holidays—Interesting Reading—My Departure for Modena—Comic Adventure—Route for Pavia—Intrigue at Piacenza—Interview with the Marquis Goldoni—Second year at College—Charming Voyage—Sermon—Return to Pavia through Lombardy—Agreeable Incident—Danger of Assassination—Stay at Milan with the Marquis Goldoni.

Four months of vacation! Sixty leagues from home, and the same distance returning! We paid no board in this college, but such an expence was by no means a matter of indifference.

I might have boarded myself in Pavia, but no student remained there who did not belong to the place.—The *sovrana* is not then worn; and not having the Pope's arms on our shoulders, it was to be feared lest the town's people of Pavia should contest with us certain rights of preference which we had always been accustomed to enjoy.

I was certain besides, that my mother would be highly delighted to see me. I resolved therefore to take my departure, and being short of money, I went by water, having for servant and guide a brother of the butler of the college. The voyage was in no way remarkable. I quitted Chiozza in a secular dress, and returned in an ecclesiastical one.

My band was not much calculated to inspire devotion; but my mother, who was piously inclined, imagined she was receiving an apostle. She embraced me with a certain degree of consideration, and requested me to correct my brother, who was causing her some uneasiness.

He was a very impatient and unruly lad, who absented himself from school for the sake of fishing, and who at eleven years of age fought like a devil, and cared for no body. My father, who knew him well, destined him for a soldier; but my mother wished to make a monk of him, and this was a subject of continual dispute betwixt them.

I troubled myself very little about my brother. —I sought for amusement, and found none.— Chiozza appeared to me more dirty than ever. I had formerly a small library, and I looked for my old Cicognini, of which I could find but a part, my brother having used the rest in making papers for his hair.

The Canon Gennari was still the friend of the family. My father had cured him of all the diseases which afflicted him, real and imaginary; and he was more frequently with us than at home. I requested him to procure me some books, but of the dramatic kind, if possible. The good canon was not himself over-stocked with literature, but he promised however to do what he could for me; and he kept his word.

He brought me, a few days afterwards, an old

comedy, bound in parchment, and, without taking the trouble of looking into it, he gave it to me, on my promise to return it instantly, for he had taken it, without saying any thing, from the closet of one of his brethren.

It was the *Mandragora* of Machiavel. I was not acquainted with it, but had heard of it, and knew very well that it was not the most chaste production in the world.

I devoured it on the first reading, and I perused it at least ten times afterwards. My mother paid no attention to the book I was reading, for I had received it from an ecclesiastic; but my father surprised me one day in my room while I was making notes and remarks on the *Mandragora*. He knew the piece, and was aware how dangerous it was for a young man of seventeen. He insisted on knowing from whom I got it; and I told him. He lectured me severely, and quarrelled with the poor canon, who had merely sinned through inadvertency.

I had very good and very solid reasons to urge as an excuse to my father, but he would not listen to me.

It was neither the free style nor the scandalous intrigue of the piece which fascinated me; its lubricity even disgusted me; and I could perceive that the abuse of confession was a heinous crime both in the eye of God and man; but it was the first comedy of character which had ever fallen into my hands; and I was quite enchanted with it.

How desirable it would have been, had the Italian authors continued, after this comedy, to give decent and respectful pieces, and to draw their characters from nature instead of the romantic intrigues in which they indulged.

But the honour of ennobling comedy, and making it subservient to purposes of utility, by exposing vice and absurdity to derision and correction, was reserved for Moliere.

I was yet unacquainted with this great man; for I knew nothing of French. I proposed however to learn it, and in the mean time I accustomed myself to consider men closely, and to remark every appearance of originality of character.

The holidays were now drawing to an end, and my departure became necessary. An abbé of our acquaintance was going to Modena, and my father availed himself of the opportunity. He was the more disposed to make me take that road, as I was to be supplied with money in Modena.

My companion and myself embarked with the courier of Modena. We arrived in two days, and went to lodge with one of my father's tenants, who let furnished lodgings.

In this house there was a servant-maid, neither old nor young, ugly nor pretty; she looked on me with an eye of friendship, and took care of me with marked and singular attention. I toyed with her occasionally, she shewed no sort of reluctance to it, and from time to time she dropped a tear or two.

On the day of my departure, I rose at an early hour to pack up my different articles, when *Tonetta* (that was the name of the girl) entered my room, and without any preliminaries began to embrace me. I was not libertine enough to take advantage of her situation, and endeavoured to avoid her, but she insisted on going off with me.—"With me!"—"Yes, my dear friend, or I shall throw myself out at the window."—"But I am going in a post-chaise."—"Very well; there will only be our two selves."—"My servant?"—"He will mount behind." The master and mistress were seeking Tonetta every where. They entered, and found her in tears.—"What is the matter?"—"Nothing."

I made what dispatch I could, and was ready for my departure. I had destined a sequin for Tonetta; she wept; I knew not what to do; I stretched out my hand, and offered her the piece. She took it, and kissed it; and, all in tears as she was, put it in her pocket.

I had enough to pay the expenses of posting to Pavia; but not finding my cousin *Zavarisi* at Modena, who had orders to supply me with some money, I should have been quite destitute on reaching college, where those who have exhibitions require a *purse* for their pocket expenses.

I arrived in the evening of the same day at Piacenza. I had a letter of recommendation from my father for Counsellor *Barilli*, whom I accordingly visited, and who received me very politely.—

He offered to lodge me in his house; an offer which I very properly accepted. He was indisposed and desirous of repose, and I was equally so—so that we made a hasty supper and went early to bed.

Reflecting seriously on my situation, I was tempted to borrow a hundred crowns from my dear relation, who appeared so good and kind to me: but he no longer owed any thing to my father, having paid him even before the two last instalments became due; and I was afraid lest my age, and my quality of scholar, should appear by no means calculated to inspire him with confidence in me.

In this state of irresolution and apprehension, I went to bed; but thank heaven! neither embarrassments, nor chagrins, nor reflections have ever destroyed my appetite or disturbed my repose: and I slept soundly.

Next morning the counsellor sent to enquire whether I would breakfast with him? I was completely dressed, and on descending, I found every thing ready. My landlord had a dish of soup, and there was a cup of chocolate for me; and breakfasting and talking together, the conversation became at last interesting.

"My dear child," said he, "I am old; I have had a dangerous attack, and I expect every day the orders of Providence to take my leave of this world."—I was proceeding to say those kind things which are usually uttered in such cases: but he

interrupted me:—"No flattery, my friend; we are born to die, and my career is far advanced.—I have satisfied your father," he continued, "for the remainder of the dower which was due from my family to his; but on searching among my papers and the accounts of my domestic concerns, I have found an account opened between M. Goldoni your grandfather, and myself."—O Heavens, said I to myself, do we then owe him any thing?—"I have made every examination," added the counsellor; "I have compared letters and books, and I am certain that I still owe a sum to his heirs."—I began now to breathe, and I wished to speak; but he still interrupted me and continued his discourse.

"I should not like to die," said he, "without discharging it. I have heirs who only wait for my death to dissipate the property which I have saved for them; and your father would have some difficulty in procuring payment. Ah! if he were here," continued he, "with what pleasure would I give him the money!"

"Sir," said I, with an air of importance, "I am his son: *Pater et filius censentur una et eadem persona;* so says Justinian, as you know better than I do."—"Aha!" said he, "you are studying law then?"—"Yes, sir," said I; "and I shall be a licentiate in a short time; I shall go to Milan, where I mean to follow the profession of Advocate." He looked at me, and smiled; and then asked me my

age. I was a little embarrassed: for my certificate of baptism and my reception in the college did not tally. I answered however with assurance and without violation of truth: "I have in my pocket, sir, the letters-patent of my college: would you wish to look at them? You will see that I was past eighteen when I was received, and this is my second year; eighteen and two are twenty; and I am close on my twenty-first year:—*Annus inceptus habetur pro completo*; and according to the Venetian code, majority is attained at twenty-one." (I tried to perplex matters; but I was only nineteen.)

M. Barelli, however, was not to be duped.—He clearly saw that I was still in my minority, and that he should be risking his money. He had, however, a recommendation from my father in my favour; and why was he to suppose me capable of deceiving him? But he changed the discourse; he next asked me why I had not followed the profession of my father, and no longer talked of money.

I answered, that I had no taste for medicine; and immediately recurring to what was uppermost in my mind: "Might I ask you, sir," said I, "what is the amount of the sum you owe my father?" "two thousand *lire* of this country (about thirty pounds); the money is in that drawer." —Still however he did not touch it.—"Sir," added I with a degree of curiosity somewhat keen; "is it in gold or silver?"—"It is in gold," said he, "in sequins of Florence, which, after those of Venice,

are in the greatest request. They are very convenient for carrying. Would you," said he, with a waggish air, "take the charge of them?"—"With the greatest pleasure, sir," replied I; "I shall give you a receipt, I shall inform my father, and account to him for it."—"Will you dissipate it?" said he; "Will you dissipate this money?"—"Alas! sir," replied I, with vivacity, "you do not know me; I assure you I am incapable of a bad action: the Almoner of the college is the treasurer whom my father has appointed for my little revenue; and upon my honour, sir, on reaching Pavia, I shall place the sequins in the hands of this worthy Abbé."

"Well, well," said he, "I shall rely on your honesty; write me a discharge agreeably to this draught which I have prepared."—I took the pen; M. Barilli opened his drawer, and spread out the sequins on the desk. I looked at them with an eye of affection.—"Stop," said he; "I forgot you are travelling, and there are robbers."—I remarked that I travelled post, and that there was nothing to apprehend.—He was of a different opinion, however, and continued to insist on the danger.—I brought in my guide, the brother of the butler; and then M. Barilli appeared satisfied. He delivered a lecture to both of us.—I still trembled.—At last he gave me the money; and I was consoled for every thing.

The counsellor and myself dined together, and after dinner, the horses arrived. I took my leave, and set out for Pavia.

Scarcely had I entered the town, when I went to deposit the sequins in the hands of my treasurer. I asked six for myself, which he gave me, and I continued to manage the remainder of the sum so well, that I had enough for the whole season at college, and my expenses home.

This year I was somewhat less dissipated than the former. I attended to my lessons at the University, and seldom accepted the parties of pleasure to which I was invited.

In October and in November, four of my companions were licentiated. In Italy, no ceremony can take place without the decoration of a sonnet.

I was supposed to possess a faculty of versification, and had become the panegyrist of the deserving and undeserving.

During the Christmas holidays, the Marquis Goldoni came to Pavia, at the head of a commission from the Senate of Milan, to investigate a canal in the district of Pavia, which had become the subject of several law suits, and he did me the honour of taking me with him. Six days afterwards I returned to the college, quite proud of the distinction which I had received. This piece of ostenstation was highly injurious to me; it excited the envy of my companions, who from that

moment, perhaps, meditated the revenge which they took the following year.

Two of them laid a snare for me which nearly ruined me. They took me to a place of bad fame with which I was unacquainted. I wished to make my exit, but the doors were shut, and I leaped out at the window. This made a noise, and came to the ears of the prefect of the college. In justification of myself I was obliged to accuse the guilty, for in such a situation, charity begins at home. One was expelled, and another put under arrest; but this made me a number of enemies.

When the holidays came, I was desirous of passing them at Milan, and informing my protector of the disagreeable affair which had taken place; but two countrymen of my own whom I met by chance in a tennis-court, induced me to alter my determination.

These were the secretary and maître d'hotel of the Resident of the Republic of Venice at Milan. This minister (M. Salvioni) having quitted this life, it became necessary for his suite and equipages to return to Venice; and the two persons in question were at Pavia for the purpose of hiring a covered barge, in which they offered to give me a place. They assured me that the society would be delightful, that I should want neither for good cheer, play, nor excellent music, and all *gratis*. Could I refuse such an opportunity?

I accepted it without a moment's hesitation;

but as they did not set out immediately, I was obliged to wait, and the college was on the point of closing. The prefect, with great kindness, and with a view perhaps of pleasing my protector, offered to keep me in his house, and this was a new crime in the eyes of my companions. They were irritated afresh at this partiality of my superior for me.—The knaves! I suffered dearly for it.

When the company was ready to set off, I was sent for; I repaired to the banks of the *Tesino*, and entered the covered barge where all were assembled.

Nothing could be more convenient or more elegant than this small vessel, called *burchiello*, and which had been sent for expressly from Venice. There was a roomy apartment and an anti-chamber covered over with wood surmounted with a balustrade, lighted up on both sides, and adorned with glasses, paintings, and engravings, and fitted up with cupboards, benches, and chairs, in the first style of conveniency. It was a very different affair from the bark of the comedians of Rimini.

We were in all ten masters and a number of domestics. There were beds under the prow and under the poop; but we travelled only by day; and it was decided that we should sleep in good inns, or when we could find none, that we were to demand hospitality from the rich benedictines who are in the possession of immense property along the two banks of the Po.

All these gentlemen played on some instrument. We had three violins, a violoncello, two oboes, a French horn, and a guitar. I was the only person who was good-for-nothing. I was ashamed of it, and by way of remedying my want of ability, I employed myself two hours every day in putting in verse, either good or bad, the anecdotes and agreeable adventures of the preceding day. This piece of complaisance was productive of great pleasure to my travelling companions, and served to amuse us after our coffee.

Music was their favourite occupation. At the close of day, they ranged themselves on a sort of deck which formed the roof of our floating habitation, and making the air resound with their harmony, they attracted from all quarters the nymphs and shepherds of this river which was the grave of Phaëton.

Perhaps, my dear reader, you will be inclined to observe, that I am a little pompous here. It may be so; but this is the way I painted our serenade in my verses. The fact is, that the banks of the Po (called by the Italian poets the king of floods) was lined with all the inhabitants of the environs, who came in crowds to hear us. The display of hats and handkerchiefs in the air was a sufficient indication of their pleasure and their applause.

We arrived at Cremona at six o'clock in the evening. The inhabitants had got notice that we were to pass through that place; and the banks

of the river were filled with people awaiting our arrival.

We landed: we were received with transports of joy. We were ushered into a superb house which was partly in the town and partly in the country. We gave a concert, and the musicians of the town added to the pleasure. We had a splendid supper, danced the whole night, and, with the sun, returned to our barge, where we found our mattresses delicious.

The same scene nearly was repeated at Piacenza, Stellada, and at the *Bottrigues*, in the house of the Marquis Tassoni; and in this manner amidst every species of delight and amusement, we arrived at Chiozza, where I was to separate from the most amiable and interesting society in the world.

My companions were friendly enough to accompany me. I introduced them to my father, who thanked them most sincerely, and even urged them to sup with him, but they wished to reach Venice that evening. They asked me for the verses which I had composed on our voyage. I requested time to make a fair copy of them. I promised to send them, and I kept my word.

My mother had formed an acquaintance with a Donna Maria-Elizabetta Bonaldi, a nun of the convent of St. Francis, sister of M. Bonaldi, advocate and notary, of Venice. They had received in this convent, from Rome, a relic of their seraphic founder, which was to be exposed with pomp and

edification. For this purpose a sermon was requisite, and Donna Bonaldi, on the faith of my clerical habiliments, believed me moralist, theologian, and orator. She was the protector of a young abbé, graceful in manner, and possessed of a good memory; and she entreated of me to compose a sermon and confide it to her protegé, being sure that he would deliver it admirably.

I at first sought to be excused, but afterwards reflecting that the panegyric of Pius V. was delivered every year in my college, and was composed by one of the students, I accepted this opportunity of exercising myself in an art which did not appear to me very difficult.

I composed my sermon in fifteen days. The little abbé committed it to memory, and delivered it as well as an old practised preacher could have done. The sermon produced the greatest effect: the audience wept, applauded, and kept sideling upon their chairs. The orator grew warm, and worked away with his hands and feet. On this the applause increased, and the poor devil was quite exhausted. He called for *silence* from the pulpit; and silence immediately ensued.

It was known that I composed it, and the compliments and happy presages were numberless. I had highly flattered the nuns, and turned the discourse on them in a delicate manner, ascribing to them the possession of every virtue unblemished by

bigotry: (I knew them, and was well aware that they were not bigots:) and this was the means of procuring me a magnificent present in embroidery, lace, and sweetmeats.

The labour of my sermon, and the discussions which followed, occupied me so long, that my holidays had nearly expired. My father wrote to Venice for a carriage to convey me to Milan. An opportunity immediately occurred. My father and myself went to Padua, where there was a return chaise for Milan. The driver was known and could be relied on; and I set out alone in his chaise.

When we got out of the town, my conductor fell in with one of his comrades who was going the same road, and who also had but one person in his chaise. This was a woman, who seemed to be young and pretty. I was desirous of seeing her more nearly, and at the first dinner my curiosity was gratified.

She was a Venetian, about the age of thirty, as far as I could judge, and very polite and amiable. We soon formed an acquaintance with each other, and arranged matters with our drivers, that to avoid being jolted in the bad roads, we should occupy the same chaise, and two of the horses should be relieved alternately.

Our conversation was very cheerful, but strictly decorous. I easily saw that my companion was

not a vestal; but she possessed the manners of genteel life, and we passed the night in our separate rooms with the greatest regularity.

On arriving at *Desenzano*, on the banks of the lake of Garda, between *Brescia* and *Verona*, we alighted at an inn which commanded a view of the lake.

There were many passengers that day, and but one room with two beds for the lady and myself. What was to be done? Some arrangement was necessary. The room was very large; the beds did not touch one another. We supped, and took leave of one another for the night, and went each of us to our separate bed.

I soon fell asleep as usual; but I was disturbed by a violent noise, and I awoke under considerable alarm. There was no light, except that of the moon through the grating of the windows, which had neither shutters nor curtains; by the help of which I saw a woman in her chemise, and a man at her feet. I asked what was the matter? When my beautiful heroine, with a pistol in her hand, said to me in a haughty and ironical tone, "Open the door, M. Abbé! Call out robbers! and then go to bed again." I did not fail to do so,—I opened the door, called out, and people came. The robber was taken—I put questions to my companion, who did not deign to give an account of her bravery. This, however, I bore with patience, and went to bed again and slept till the morning.

We set out in the morning. I thanked my companion, who still rallied me. We continued our route through Brescia, and arrived at Milan. There we parted very politely; I quite content with her modesty, and she, perhaps, displeased with my continence.

I alighted at the Marquis Goldoni's, and remained there six days, till the end of the holidays. The conversation of my protector was altogether calculated to inspire me with hope and ardour. I believed myself on the very pinnacle of good fortune, while I stood on the verge of ruin.



CHAP. V.

Third Year at College—My first and last Satire—My Expulsion from College—Sad Voyage—Failure in my Designs—Singular Rencounter—My Arrival at Chiozza—Journey to Udine—Account of that Town and the Province of Friuli.

I LEARNED at Milan the death of the superior of my college, and I was acquainted with the Abbé *Scarabelli*, his successor. On my arrival at Pavia, I immediately paid my respects to the new prefect, who was very intimate with Senator Goldoni, and who assured me of his good wishes.

I also visited the new dean of the students, who, after the usual ceremonies, asked me if I wished to maintain my civil-law thesis this year. He added that it was my turn, but, that if I was not particularly desirous, he should like to pass another in my place. I told him very frankly, that as my turn was come, I had good reasons for availing myself of it, as I was anxious to finish my course, and settle at Milan. The same day I requested the prefect to have the goodness to cause lots to be drawn, to ascertain the points I had to defend. The day was fixed; the articles were destined for me; and I was to maintain my thesis during the Christmas holidays.

Every thing went on charmingly, and I was considered a spirited young man, desirous of acquiring honour. In the mean time some amusement was necessary. Two days afterwards I went out for the purpose of paying visits; and I began with the house which I was fondest of. I rang the bell, (in Italy there are no porters,) and, on the door being opened, I was told the lady of the house was sick, and that her daughter received no visits. I was sorry for this, and a number of compliments passed on both sides.

I went to another door, and, on seeing the servant, asked if I could have the honour of seeing the ladies?—"They are all in the country, sir;" (and yet I had seen two female heads at the window.) As I could make nothing of all this, I went to a third place; and still nobody was at home.

I own that I was very much piqued, that I believed myself insulted, and I could not conjecture the cause. I resolved, however, not to expose myself to any more of those unpleasant occurrences, and with a troubled mind and enraged heart I returned home.

In the evening I related, at the fire-side where the students generally assembled, with an air of greater indifference than I really felt, the adventure which I had experienced. Some pitied me and others laughed at me. On the arrival of the supper-hour, we entered the refectory, and afterwards withdrew to our respective rooms.

While I was musing on the unpleasant circumstances which I had experienced, I heard a knocking at my door, and four of my comrades immediately entered; who told me they had something serious to communicate to me. As I had not a sufficient number of chairs for them, we made a settee of the bed. I willingly prepared to listen to them; but all four wished to speak at once; each had his story to tell, and each his opinion to give. The following is the substance of what I could gather from their account.

The town's people of Pavia were sworn enemies to the students, and, during the last holidays, they had entered into a conspiracy against us. It was agreed on at their meetings, that any girl who received the visits of a student, should never be asked in marriage by a town's man, and a resolution to this purpose was signed by forty of them. This resolution had been circulated in every house; the mothers and daughters had taken the alarm, and the students had all of a sudden become a dangerous object in their eyes.

The general opinion of my four companions was in favour of revenge. I had no great desire to interfere in the business; but they treated me as a coward and a poltroon, and I was foolish enough to consider my honour at stake, and to promise not to quit the party.

I imagined I was speaking to four friends; but they were traitors who ardently desired my

ruin. They still entertained a grudge against me for the affair of the preceding year, and they had nourished hatred against me for a whole twelve-month in their hearts, and wished for nothing more than an occasion for giving vent to it. I was their dupe, but I had scarcely entered my eighteenth year, and I had to do with old foxes of twenty-eight and thirty.

These worthies were in the habit of carrying pistols in their pockets, to the use of which I was an entire stranger. They very generously furnished me with them; I thought them pretty, I delighted in handling them, and my head was quite turned.

I had fire-arms on me and knew not what to do with them.—Could I dare to force open a door? Independently of the danger of such an attempt, it would have been a violation of the rules of decency and respectability. I wished to rid myself of this useless incumbrance; my good friends frequently came to visit me and renew the powder in the pan; they recounted unheard-of feats of courage, the obstacles which they had surmounted, the rivals whom they had vanquished; I, in my turn, had also sprung over barriers, reduced mothers and daughters to subjection, and made head against the bravos of the town; we were all equally veridical, and all of us perhaps equally brave.

When the traitors saw that notwithstanding

my pistols, I did nothing to draw attention towards me, they went to work in a different way. An accusation was lodged with the superiors against me of having fire-arms in my pockets, and I was visited one day on entering the college, by the servants, who found my pistols on me.

The prefect of the college was not at Pavia, and the vice-prefect ordered me to be confined to my room under arrest. I was desirous of taking advantage of this time to get on with my thesis, but my pretended friends still came to tempt me, and to employ more dangerous means of seduction, as they had a tendency to tickle my self-love.

"You are poet," said they; "and you have consequently much more sure and efficacious instruments for your revenge than pistols and other fire-arms; a stroke of the pen, judiciously applied, is a bomb which crushes the principal object, and of which the splinters carry havoc right and left among the adherents." "Courage! courage!" they all exclaimed at once; "we shall furnish you with singular anecdotes, and you will be revenged, and we also."

I was quite aware of the danger and inconveniences to which they wished to expose me, and I represented to them the troublesome consequences which might be the result. "By no means," said they, "nobody will know; we are all four good friends, and men of honour; we

promise to observe the utmost discretion, and we are willing to take a solemn and sacred oath that nobody shall ever learn any thing of the business."

Constitutionally weak, and occasionally foolish and imprudent, I yielded to the temptation, and in thus satisfying the desires of my enemies, I put arms in their hands against myself.

My first idea was to compose a comedy in the manner of Aristophanes; but distrusting the sufficiency of my powers, and being limited besides in point of time, I composed an *Atellano*, a species of rude comedy among the Romans, abounding in pleasantry and satire.

The title of my *Atellano* was *the Colossus*. That I might give the perfection of beauty in all its proportions to the colossal statue, I took the eyes of Miss Such-a-one, the mouth of another, the neck of a third, &c.; no part of the body was forgotten; but the artists and amateurs were of different opinions, and found defects every where.

This satire was calculated to wound the delicacy of several decent and respectable families, and, unfortunately for me, I contrived to give an interest to it by amusing and attractive sallies, and by traits of that *vis comica*, which in me had a great deal of nature, and very little prudence.

My work was charming in the opinion of my four enemies; they immediately sent for a young

man who made two copies of it in one day, which the knaves seized upon, and circulated in every society and coffee-house of the town. My name was not to be mentioned, the oaths of secresy were reiterated, and they kept their word, for my name was not pronounced; but having formerly composed a quatrain, containing my name, surname, and country, they tacked this quatrain to the tail of the Colossus, as if I had had the audacity to boast of it.

The Atellano became the novelty of the day, and those who were not implicated in it, laughed at the work, while they condemned the author. Twelve families cried for vengeance, and my life was sought after; but fortunately for me, I was still under arrest. Several of my companions were insulted; the Pope's college was besieged; the prefect was written to, who returned precipitately, and wishing to save me, wrote immediately to the Senator Goldoni. The latter dispatched letters to the Senator Erba Odescalchi, governor of Pavia; the archbishop from whom I had received the tonsure was applied to in my favour, as well as the Marquis Ghislieri, by whom I was named; but all my protections, and all manner of proceedings were useless; my sacrifice was inevitable, and had it not been for the privilege of the place in which I was, I should have been laid hold of by the ministers of justice. My exclusion from college was announced to me, and I was detained

till the storm was calmed, that I might take my departure without danger.

What an accumulation of horror, remorse, and regret! My hopes vanished, my situation sacrificed, my time lost! Parents, protectors, friends, acquaintances, would all be justified in taking part against me; I was afflicted and inconsolable; I kept my room, I saw nobody, and nobody came to see me. What a miserable state of mind—what a wretched situation!

In my solitude I was oppressed with grief, and filled with objects which incessantly tormented me, and projects which rapidly succeeded one another on my mind.—The injury which I had done to myself, and the injustice which I had been guilty of towards others, were perpetually before my eyes; and the sense of this injustice weighed more on my mind than my own personal disaster.

If at the distance of sixty years, there should still remain at Pavia some remembrance of my person and my imprudence, I entreat the forgiveness of those whom I offended, while I assure them that I have been amply punished for my fault, and that I believe it to be sufficiently expiated.

While I was plunged in remorse, and occupied with these reflections, I received the following letter from my father, which was a terrible augmentation of my chagrin and despair:

"I should wish you, my dear son, to pass the vacation this year at Milan. I have engaged to

go to Udine in Venetian Friuli, to undertake a cure which may occupy me some length of time, and I am uncertain but I may also be obliged to go into Austrian Friuli, on account of another person suffering under the same disease. I shall write a letter of acknowledgment to the marquis for his generous offers to us, but you must also on your part endeavour to merit his goodness. You inform me that you have shortly to defend a thesis; endeavour to acquit yourself with honour. By this means you will please your protector, and highly delight your father and mother, who love you dearly, &c.

This letter completed my degradation. "How," said I, "shall I dare to exhibit myself before my parents, covered with shame and universal contempt!" I was in such dread of this terrible moment, that to extricate myself from the consequences of one fault, I meditated another, which might have totally ruined me.

"No; I will not expose myself to the most deserved and the most cutting reproaches; no, I will not appear before my irritated family; Chiozza shall never see me more; I will go any where rather than return to it; I will run away, and try my fortune, and either make reparation for my fault, or perish. I will go to Rome, where I shall perhaps find the friend of my father who was so kind to him, and who will not abandon me. Ah! if I could but become the pupil of Gravina, the man

the most versant in belles-lettres, and the most skilled in the dramatic art. Ah! if he should but conceive such an affection for me as he had for Metastasio! Have not I also good dispositions, talents, and genius! Yes, I must to Rome. But how can I get thither? Have I money enough? I must go a-foot.....a-foot!.....yes, a-foot. And my trunk and my effects?—Let the trunk and effects go to the devil.—All that I want is some shirts, some stockings, neckcloths, and night-caps." While occupied with these extravagant reflections, I kept filling a portmanteau with linen, which I placed in the bottom of my trunk, destining it for my journey to Rome.

As my departure was to be instantaneous, I wrote to the almoner of the college for money, who, in his answer, informed me that he had no property of my father's in his hands, but that, nevertheless, the expence of my passage by water, and my board to Chiozza, should be defrayed by him, and that the proveditor of the house would furnish me with a small supply, for which my father should be accountable.

At the break of the following day, a coach came for me; and after my trunk was put into it, the proveditor entered it along with me. We drove to the Tessino, where we got into a small boat, and at the place where the Tessino flows into the Po, we went on board a large and ugly bark, which had brought a lading of salt. My guide

consigned me over to the care of the master, to whom he whispered something. He afterwards gave me a small packet from the almoner of the college, and after saluting me and wishing me a prosperous voyage, he at last took his leave.

The first thing I did was to examine my treasure. I opened the packet. Heavens! what an agreeable surprize for me: I found in it forty-two sequins of Florence (nearly twenty Louis-d'ors). This was sufficient to take me to Rome, supposing I travelled post and took my trunk with me..... But how could the almoner, who had no money belonging to my father, confide this sum to me? While I was occupied with these reflections, and these charming projects, the proveditor made his appearance again in his boat. He had committed a mistake: the money given to me belonged to the college, and was destined to pay a wood-merchant; and he took back the packet, and gave me thirty paoli in lieu of it, amounting to the value of about twelve shillings!

I was now rich with a vengeance! I did not want money for my passage to Chiozza, but how was I to manage my journey to Rome? The sequins which I had been handling, added mightily to my mortification: but I was obliged to console myself in the best way I could, and to bring my mind to bear with the inconveniences of a pilgrimage.

My bed was under the prow, and my trunk be-

side me: I dined and supped with the master of the bark, whose long stories were quite insufferable.

On the second day we arrived at Piacenza, where the master, having some business to transact, was induced to land. This appeared to me a favourable moment for my escape. I took my portmanteau, and told my gentleman, that I was commissioned to give it to Counsellor Barilli, and that I would take this favourable opportunity to do so; but the knave would not let me go. He said, he had positive instructions to detain me; and when I persisted in my intention, he threatened to have recourse to violent measures. I was obliged to yield to force, and stomach my chagrin: I had no alternative but to go to Chiozza, or throw myself into the Po. I retired to my nook: my misfortunes had not hitherto drawn a tear from me, but I now wept bitterly.

In the evening I was sent for to supper, but refused to go. A few minutes afterwards, I heard the words *Deo gratias* pronounced in a pathetic tone by an unknown voice. It was still tolerably light; and, on looking through a crevice of the door, I observed a monk, who was addressing himself to me. I opened, and let him in.

He was a Dominican of Palermo, the brother of a famous Jesuit, highly celebrated as a preacher; and he had embarked that day at Piacenza, and, like myself, was bound for Chiozza. He knew my story, the master having revealed every thing to

him; and he came to offer me the temporal and spiritual consolation which his vocation entitled him to bestow upon me, and which my situation seemed to require.

He displayed a great deal of sensibility and fervency in his discourse; I saw him shed tears; at least I saw him apply his handkerchief to his eyes. I was touched with this, and abandoned myself to his mercy.

The master sent to inform us, that they were waiting for us. The reverend father was by no means disposed to lose his collation, but seeing me full of compunction, he begged the master to have the goodness to wait a moment. Then turning towards me, he embraced me, and, with tears in his eyes, pointed out to me the dangers of my situation, and shewed me that the infernal enemy might take possession of me, and plunge me into an eternal abyss. I have already hinted, that I was subject to fits of hypochondriacal vapours, and I was then in a most deplorable situation. My exorcist perceiving this, proposed confession to me. I threw myself at his feet. "God be praised!" said he; "yes, my dear child, prepare yourself till my return:" and he then went and supped without me.

I remained on my knees, and began a conscientious examination of myself. In half an hour the father returned with a wax light in his hand, and seated himself on my trunk. I delivered my *confiteor*, and went through my general confession

with the requisite humility and contrition. It was necessary to exhibit signs of repentance; and the first point was to make reparation for the injury done by me to the families against whom I had directed my satire. But how was this to be done at present? "Till you are enabled to retract your calumnies," said the reverend father, "you can only propitiate the wrath of God by means of alms; for alms-giving is the first meritorious work which effaces sin."—"Yes, father," said I to him, "I shall bestow them."—"By no means," he replied; "the sacrifice must be instantly made."—"But I have only thirty paoli."—"Very well, child; in foregoing the money which we possess, we have as much merit as if we gave more." I drew forth my thirty paoli, and requested my confessor to take the charge of distributing them to the poor. This he willingly acceded to, and then he gave me absolution.

I wished to continue still longer, having some things to say which I had forgotten; but the reverend father began to doze, and his eyes closed every moment: he told me to keep myself quiet, and he took me by the hand, gave me his benediction, and hurried away to his bed.

We were still eight days longer on our passage; I wished to confess myself every day, but I had no more money for penitence.

I arrived, trembling, at Chiozza, with my confessor, who undertook to bring about a reconcilia-

tion between me and my relations. My father was at Venice on business; my mother saw me coming, and received me with tears; for the almoner of the college had not failed to inform my family of the particulars of my conduct. The reverend father had but little difficulty in touching the heart of a tender mother; she possessed ability and firmness, and turning towards the dominican, by whom she was fatigued: "My reverend father," said she, "if my son had committed a knavish action, I would never have consented to see him more; but he has been guilty of a piece of imprudence, and I pardon him."

My travelling companion would have wished that my father had been at home, to present him to the prior of St. Dominic. There was something under this, which I could not well comprehend. My mother told him, that she expected my father in the course of the day; at which the reverend father appeared satisfied, and without any ceremony he invited himself to dine with us.

While we were at table, my father arrived, and I rose and shut myself in the adjoining room. On my father's entrance, he perceived a large cowl. "This is a stranger," said my mother, "who demanded hospitality."—"But this other plate—this other chair?"—It was no longer possible to be silent respecting me; my mother wept; the monk harangued; he did not forget the parable of the prodigal son. My father was good-natured, and

very fond of me; in short, I was sent for, and at last restored to favour.

In the afternoon, my father accompanied the dominican to his convent. They were unwilling to receive him, as all monks who travel, ought to have a written permission from their superiors, which they call *obedience*, and which serves for a passport and certificate; and the one in the possession of the present applicant was old, torn, and illegible, and his name unknown. My father, who had credit, got him to be received, on condition that he should not remain long.

Let us finish the history of this worthy monk. He spoke to my father and mother of a relic which was set in a silver watch, and he made them fall on their knees, when he shewed them a piece of cord twisted round iron wire. This was a piece of the lace of the Virgin Mary, which had even served for her divine Son; and the proof was confirmed, as he said, by a miracle which never failed; for when the lace was thrown into the fire, the flames respected the relic, it was drawn out uninjured; and it was then plunged into oil, which immediately became miraculous oil, and performed wonderful cures.

My father and mother could have wished to see this miracle, but it could not be performed without preparations and pious ceremonies, and in presence of a certain number of devout persons, for greater edification, and the glory of God. A good deal of

conversation took place on this subject; and as my father was the physician of the nuns of St. Francis, he managed matters with them so well, that they determined to allow the miracle to be performed according to the instructions of the dominican; and the day and place were fixed for the ceremony taking place. The reverend father contrived to procure a good stock of oil and some money for the masses which were necessary for him on his journey.

Every thing was executed; but next day the bishop and magistrate having learned that a religious ceremony had taken place without permission, in which a strange monk had dared to put on the stole, bring people together and boast of his miracles, proceeded separately to the verification of the facts. The miraculous lace, which resisted the flames, was nothing more nor less than iron wire, arranged in such a manner as to deceive the eyes. The nuns were reprimanded, and the monk disappeared.

My father and myself took our departure a few days afterwards for Friuli, and we passed through Porto-Gruero, where my mother possessed some revenue as a public creditor. This small town, on the borders of Friuli, is the residence of the bishop of Concordia, a city of great antiquity, but almost abandoned on account of the badness of the air.

Continuing our route, we passed the Taillia-mento, sometimes a river and sometimes a torrent, which must be forded, as there are neither bridges nor ferry-boats; and we at length arrived at Udine, the capital of Venetian Friuli.

Travellers make no mention of this province, which is, however, deserving of an honourable place in their narratives.

This neglect of so considerable a portion of Italy, has always displeased me, and I shall say a few words respecting it in passing.

Friuli, which is also called in Italy, *La Patria del Friul*, is a very large province, extending from the Marcia Trevigiana to Carinthia. It is divided between the state of Venice and Austria; the Li-sonce is the boundary between them, and Gorizia is the capital of the Austrian part.

In no province of Italy are there so many nobles as in this. Almost all the estates are erected into fiefs, holding of their respective sovereigns; and in the castle of Udine, there is a parliament-hall for the assembly of the states, a privilege which exists in no other province in Italy.

Friuli has always supplied both nations with great men; and there are many at the court of Vienna and in the senate of Venice. Formerly there was a patriarch of Aquileia, who resided at Udine; for Aquileia could never recover itself after being sacked by Attila, king of the Huns,

who rendered it uninhabitable; but this patriarchate has been since suppressed, and the single diocese which embraced the whole province has been divided into two archbishopricks, the one at Udine and the other at Gorizia.

Friuli is in a high state of cultivation, and the productions of the earth, grain as well as wine, are very abundant and of the best quality. Picolet, which bears such a resemblance to Tokay, is made there, and Venice draws a great part of the wine necessary for the public consumption from the vineyards of Udine.

The Furlan language is peculiar to the country, and is as difficult to be understood as that of Genoa even by Italians. This *patois* seems to bear great resemblance to the French. All the feminine words, which in Italian end in *a*, terminate in *e* in Friuli, and all the plurals of the two genders terminate in *s*.

I am quite at a loss to know how these French terminations, and a prodigious quantity of French words could penetrate into so distant a country.

Julius Cesar, it is true, traversed the mountains of Friuli, and hence they are called the Julian Alps; but the Romans neither terminated the feminine words in the French nor the Furlan way.

What is most singular in the Furlan *patois*, they call *night*, *evening*, and *evening*, *night*. One would almost be tempted to believe that Petrarca

was speaking of the people of Friuli, when he says in one of his lyric poems

Gente cui si fa notte inanzi sera.

In English,

People to whom night appears before evening

But we should be very wrong, if we were to conclude, from this, that the nation is not as clever and industrious as the rest of Italy.

At Udine, among other things, there is an academy of belles-lettres, called *Degli-Sventati*, the emblem of which is a windmill in the hollow of a valley, with this epigraph:

Non è quaggiuso ogni vapore spento.

Every vapour is not extinguished in these lower regions.

Letters are cultivated there with great success. There are artists of the first merit, and the society is very easy and very amiable.

Udine, which is twenty-two leagues from Venice, is governed by a noble Venetian, with the title of lieutenant, and a council of the nobility of the country, sits in the town-house, and fills the offices of the magistracy.

The town is very pretty, and the churches are very richly decorated; the pictures of John of Udine, a scholar of Raphael, are its principal ornament; there is a promenade in the middle of the

town, charming suburbs, and delicious environs. The immense palace, with the superb gardens of Passarean, belonging to the Counts of Manini, noble Venetians, is a residence worthy of a king.

I beg my reader's pardon, if the digression appears a little too long; I was glad to have an opportunity of doing justice to a country every way deserving of it.

CHAP. VI.

My serious Occupations—Theresa—Pleasant Anecdote—My Journey to Gorizia and Vipack—Charming rural party—Excursion into Germany.

My father followed his profession at *Udine*, and I resumed my studies. M. Movelli, a celebrated jurisconsult, gave lectures on civil and canon law, in his own house, for the instruction of one of his nephews; he admitted a few persons belonging to the country to his lessons, and I had the good fortune to be of the number. I own that I profited more during six months, on this occasion, than I had done during the three years at Pavia.

I had a great desire to study: but I was young, and required some agreeable relaxation; I sought for amusements, and found them of various sorts. I shall here give an account of those from which I derived great pleasure and honour; and I shall conclude by mentioning others, from which I derived neither honour nor pleasure.

We passed a very dismal and a very dirty carnival; a frightful accident took place, which threw the whole town into consternation; a gentleman of an antient and wealthy family was killed with a musket shot, on going out of the theatre; the

author of the assassination was not known; he was suspected, but no one durst speak out.

Lent arrived; I went on Ash-Wednesday to the cathedral, to hear Father Cataneo, a reformed Augustine, whose sermons I found admirable. On going away, I retained the three points of his division, word for word; and I endeavoured to compress his argument, and give an idea of its developement and moral in fourteen verses; and in my own opinion I made a very tolerable sonnet of it.

The same day I went and communicated it to M. Treo, a gentleman of Udine, well versed in the belles-lettres, who had a great taste for poetry, and my sonnet appeared very passable to him also.

He was kind enough to correct a few of the expressions, and to encourage me to compose others. I followed the preacher with great exactness, performed the same task every day, and at the close I found I had put thirty-six excellent sermons into thirty-six sonnets of one kind or another.

I had taken the precaution of sending them to the press as soon as I had sufficient materials for a sheet in quarto, and during Easter week I published my pamphlet, which was dedicated to the deputies of the town.

I was overpowered with thanks from the orator, and received many acknowledgments, and a great deal of applause from the first magistrates.

The novelty of the thing gave pleasure, and the rapidity of the execution was still more surprising.

Bravo, Goldoni; but gently, do not lavish your praises on him. There was a certain young female, four steps from my door, who pleased me infinitely, and to whom I would willingly have paid my court. Must I give you, my dear reader, the portrait of my fair one? Must I give you the complexion of the rose and the lily, the features of Venus, and the talents of Minerva? No,—such fine recitals would by no means be interesting to you; I must chat with you in my closet as I would in society. The subject matter of my memoirs is not, in my opinion, deserving either of more elegance or more care. We hear people sometimes say: "we must be elevated, we must respect the public;" but I believe we shew the highest respect for the public in exhibiting the truth naked and without ornament.

I knew only the name of the relations of the young lady; I saw her at the window; I followed her to the church or the promenade, with great modesty, but still without failing to give her now and then some mark of my inclination.

I know not whether she perceived it, but her waiting-maid was not long in discovering my object. This sorceress called on me one day; I was alone, she spake a great deal to me of herself and her mistress, and assured me that I might depend

upon both. I asked her if I might venture to write...." Yes," said she, without giving me time to finish, " write to my mistress; I will take upon me to deliver your letter to her, and to bring you back her answer."

I wished to write instantly, and I requested her to wait. " No," said she; " I am going to the holy mass, I never fail to be there, I go every day; but I shall return, on leaving the church." She left me, and I began my letter, in which, after the accustomed ceremonies, and tender expressions usual on similar occasions, I demanded a rendez-vous according to the rules. Theresa returned (this was the name of the waiting-maid); she took my letter, she wished to go, and offered me her cheek. We do not embrace women in Italy as innocently as in France; besides, she was horribly ugly; I refused as long as I could, but she clung round my neck and I was forced to kiss her.

Two days afterwards, Theresa met me in the street, and dexterously slipped a paper into my hand, which I put into my pocket. It was a letter from Miss * * *, in answer to mine; but it was so badly written, that I had infinite difficulty to make any thing out of it.

I was able to gather from it, however, that she could not receive me at home without the consent of her relations; and that, if I wished to speak to her by night in the street, she would pass a few

quarters of an hour in hearing me from her window. It was the old custom in Italy to make love under the canopy of heaven, and I was obliged to conform to it.

I repaired to the spot at one o'clock in the morning; I saw the window open, and a head covered with a night-cap make its appearance: I spoke to the head; the head answered me, and from one thing to another I pronounced several soft things, and was answered in the same tone. Encouraged by the facility which I thought I could discover, I went a little farther. All at once, I heard a burst of laughter, and perceived the window shut. I knew not what to think of it: I returned home, both satisfied and discontented; Theresa alone could solve my difficulties.

I saw her next day; but my father was at home. I descended, and went to join her in the porch of the cathedral; when I questioned her respecting the laughter of the preceding night.—"You uttered droll things," said she to me, "and my mistress laughed at them; for she is not a bigot: but mindful at last of her modesty, she shut the window. Continue," she added, "continue, and fear nothing." I was preparing to say something more to her, but she told me to be gone, as it was late and she did not wish to lose the mass.

It was not difficult for me to see that mass accorded very ill with her business of *go-between*;

she could only be a worthless character, and she really was so in the full extent of the term; but I was in love, and I thought it necessary to spare her. I continued for some time my nocturnal conversations; the head in a night-cap no longer appeared at the same window, but at another a great way from it.

I asked the reason: "her mistress," she said, "dreaded the proximity of her mother." I became on this a little more reserved in my discourse; but a few expressions rather of a free nature from the other party, encouraged me to resume my old frankness; this excited afresh the usual bursts of laughter, and the window was not afterwards shut.

As I was pressing Theresa one day to procure me an interview by day with her mistress, and as I threatened to break off the intercourse if this were not granted; "Rest contented," said she to me, "I am thinking of it as much as you, and I shall speak to the washerwoman of the family, who lives at Chiavris, half a mile distant, when I hope to be able to satisfy you. But harkee, my friend," continued she, "you ought to know the ladies, and their caprices; few of them are capable of perfect disinterestedness, and my mistress is by no means one of the most generous. If you should think fit to make her a small present, I think that such a mark of attention would very much further your views."—"What!" said I, "would she accept

a present?"...." Not from you," replied the sorceress; "but were I to present it, she would not refuse it."...." What could I give her?"...." Yesterday....listen, not farther back than yesterday, my mistress displayed a great desire to have a set of those coloured Vienna stones, which are so much in fashion at present, and which every woman longs for."...." Where are they sold?"—"O, there are none in this country sufficiently beautiful; they must be sent for from Venice: a complete set; cross, ear-rings, necklace, and broach."—"My dear Theresa, have you been to mass?"—"Not yet."—"Are you going?"—"What? will you refuse to oblige a young, amiable, and charming lady, whom you love, whom you esteem, and whom you may one day possess?"—"Silence, I understand you; I shall procure the articles, and deliver them into your hands."—"And I shall not fail to present them to my mistress, and you will see her decked with the jewels of her dear Goldoni."—"Of her dear Goldoni? Do you believe me to be the dear friend of your mistress?"—"You are somewhat so, and you cannot fail to be more so."—"When I shall have given the trinkets?"—"Yes, undoubtedly."—"Well, well, your mistress shall have them."—"So much the better."—"Farewell, Theresa."—"Adieu, Sir,.....embrace me."—"The deuce take you!"

I went to a jeweller of my acquaintance, and

gave him the commission, which he took charge of accordingly; and in four days the trinkets arrived. The set was superb, but it cost me ten sequins, besides carriage and commission. I saw Theresa, and made a sign to her,—she came, took the box, and carried it with her; and next day, which was Sunday, I saw Miss * * * at church, decked with my trinkets, which resembled rubies and emeralds.

I was as satisfied as a king; however the lady did not notice me in the way I could have desired; she did not even express the smallest mark of satisfaction to me, and the nocturnal rendezvous were suspended on account of the remarks of the neighbours.

Theresa did not fail to visit me, and tell me the prettiest things in the world from her mistress; but as I gave her to understand I had a right to expect something more, she invited me to repair next Thursday to the washerwoman's at Chiavris, when Miss * * * would give me proofs of her attachment and gratitude.—Well: on Thursday then for certain.

The time appeared very long to me; night and day I thought of nothing else: what sort of proof was I to expect? At twenty we are rash. When the day arrived, I repaired to the washerwoman's: I was there first, and in half an hour I saw Theresa make her appearance alone. I began to tremble with rage, and I gave her a very poor reception. She begged me to keep myself tranquil,

and made me ascend to a garret, the whole furniture of which consisted of a very dirty bed and a broken rush chair...I urged her to speak to me.... to tell me....She again begged me to calm myself and to listen to her.

"Alas! my dear friend," said she to me, "I am extremely dissatisfied with my mistress; for notwithstanding the attentions you have paid her, and the promise she gave me, she has failed in her word, and fallen upon pretexts to avoid following me...." What," said I, interrupting her; "fallen upon pretexts! She will not come? Is she laughing at me?"—"Hear me to the end," replied the jade; "I am as much piqued as you, and more than you are; for the trick she has played me is of such consequence to me, that I am quite distressed." She contrived to throw such an extraordinary degree of heat and vehemence into her discourse, that I really believed her zealously disposed towards me, and I even endeavoured to calm her. She changed her tone in good earnest, for assuming a tender and pathetic air, she said to me: "Listen, while I detail to you all the perfidious tricks of this little monster, who has deceived both of us. She knew, the ungrateful wretch! yes, she knew my inclination for you; at first she reproached me with the passion which I had nourished in my heart, and obliged me to sacrifice my wishes and my hopes to her: she charged me to endeavour to interest you in her favour; my

situation, my gentleness, and my character, induced me to fulfil her wishes, and the efforts which I made have cost me many sighs and tears. And yet, prepared as I was to see you happy at my own expense, I find she has been deceiving me, and she now declares her indifference for you, and orders me not to speak to her more on the subject." Transported with rage, I cried out—"And my trinkets?" Theresa cried still louder than I did, "She means to keep them." I avow honestly that the ten sequins laid out by me, contributed something to the resentment which I felt, as well as the nights which I passed, the hopes I conceived, and the shame on seeing myself deceived. I was on the point of becoming furious; but the wise, the prudent Theresa took me by the hand, and turning towards me her languishing looks; "My dear friend," said she to me, "we have been both of us deceived, and we must be revenged; we must return the contempt which the ungrateful wretch has drawn upon herself: I am ready to quit her instantly, and for any little you may be disposed to do for me, I shall never have any other ambition than that of being attached to you."

This discourse struck me dumb; I did not expect it, and I began to open my eyes. "You are in love with me then, my lady?" said I very coolly to her. "Yes," answered she, embracing me; "I love you with all my soul; and I am ready to give you the most convincing proofs of it." "I am very

grateful," replied I; "you will be so good as to give me time for reflection, and you shall certainly know my mode of thinking." After a second embrace, we quitted each other, taking different roads.

On my arrival in town, I immediately went to a milliner of my acquaintance, who worked for Miss C* * *. I had made several parties of pleasure with this girl, I had joked with her on the subject of her business, and she appeared to me adapted for the purpose which I had in view: I related to her my whole story, from beginning to end; I entreated her to unravel the mystery, and I promised her a sequin if she should be able to discover the truth. She willingly accepted of the commission, in which she succeeded admirably; for, three days afterwards, she instructed me in every thing as clearly and plainly as I could possibly desire.

After this elucidation, I saw Theresa, whom I appointed to meet me at the washerwoman's, and I set out early, that I might arrive there first. I took three persons along with me in a sort of cabriolet, and I concealed them in a corner of the shed where the washing was carried on. I had arranged matters with the mistress of the house, and I was quite sure of success.

Theresa arrived, and seemed quite satisfied with me; she wished to ascend: "No, no," said I to her, "let us go under this cover here, where we

may breathe a better air." There, seated on turf seats, she wished to begin speaking to me about her mistress, and to utter fresh invectives against her. I cut her short, and in a serious and severe tone said to her, "Miss C * * * is now out of the question, and we have only to do with Theresa, who is a jade, and who has deceived me." At this she seemed thunderstruck, and pretended to weep; I brought several of her tricks to her recollection; she denied every thing, and boasted of her honesty. On this, I desired the three persons whom I had concealed, to make their appearance. When Theresa saw the milliner, she ceased her grimaces, and with an air of effrontery, said aloud: "Ah, you slut, you have sold me;" and then, addressing herself to me, "Yes, sir," said she boldly, "I have deceived you, I will not conceal it." Every body began to laugh, and I shivered with indignation. "Stop, wretch," said I, "I shall have your examination in form drawn up. Who wrote the first letter you delivered to me?" She replied, laughing; "Myself."—"To whom did I speak several nights in the street?"—"To me."—"And who laughed so loud?"—"The laughing came from me."—"And you shut the window?"—"No, it was my mistress, who was also laughing at you."—"So your mistress was leagued with you?"—"Yes; for she believed you to be my lover."—"Believed me your lover!"—"Was I not sufficient for you?"—"Impudent slut! But my

trinkets?"—"My mistress possesses them."—"How?"—"She paid for them."—"To whom?"—"To me."—"Swindler that you are!" I was seized with a desire of inflicting marks of my vengeance upon her; but prudence came to my assistance. Content with unmasking her, I said, turning towards the witnesses of her disgrace—"I abandon her to you; let her be loaded with shame and contempt; her mistress shall be informed of her conduct." My vegeance was complete, and I departed satisfied.

I never saw the sorceress again; but I learned from the milliner, that she was turned away from the house where she served, and that it was believed she had left the place.

To indemnify myself for my lost time, I made an acquaintance with the daughter of a seller of lemonade, where I met with less difficulty, but a great deal more danger. I mentioned this second Furlan anecdote in my Pasquali edition, and I have therefore thought proper to allude to it here, lest it should be thought I invent stories at pleasure; but as the adventure does not deserve to occupy the attention of my readers, I shall pass over in silence all details respecting it, and shall merely observe, that I ran the greatest risks; that there was an intention of deceiving me in a much more serious manner; and that when I came to myself, I made my escape with all expedition to rejoin my father.

He was at Gorizia, in the house of his illustri-

ous patient Count Lantieri, lieutenant-general in the army of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, and inspector of the Austrian troops in Carniola and German Friuli.

I was very well received by that amiable nobleman, who was the delight of his country. We did not remain long at Gorizia, but passed immediately to Vipack, a very considerable market town in Carniola, at the source of a river from which it takes its name, and a fief of the house of Lantieri.

We passed four months there in the most agreeable manner possible. The nobility of that country pay their visits in whole families; fathers, children, masters, servants, horses, all set off at once, and all are received and lodged. Thirty masters may be frequently seen, sometimes in one house, and sometimes in another; but as Count Lantieri was accounted valetudinary, he went no where and received every body.

His table was not delicately but abundantly served. I still remember a dish of roast, which was the étiquette; a fore-leg of mutton, or venison, or a breast of veal, constituted the base of it; above this there were hares or pheasants; with red and grey partridges again above them, and next woodcocks or snipes, or thrushes; and the pyramid ended with larks and fig-peckers.

This strange assemblage was immediately shared out and distributed. The small birds were served up on their arrival; every one laid hold of the

game to cut it up; and the amateurs of meat saw the large pieces which were most to their taste uncovered before them.

It was also the étiquette to serve up three sorts of soup at each repast; bread soup with the ragouts; an herb soup with the first service, and peeled barley with the *entremets:* this barley was moistened with the gravy of the roast meat, and I was told that it was good for digestion.

The wines were excellent: there was a certain sort of red wine which was called the *children-getter*, and which gave rise to some good jokes.

What was most troublesome to me, was the healths which we were every moment obliged to drink. On St. Charles's day they began with his imperial majesty, and each guest was presented with a drinking vessel of a very singular kind: it was a glass machine of a foot in length, composed of different balls, which diminished progressively, and were separated from one another by small tubes, and which were terminated by a longitudinal aperture, that could be very conveniently applied to the mouth, and through which the liquor issued; the bottom of this machine, called the *glo-glo*, was filled, and on placing the top to the mouth, and raising the elbow, the wine which passed through the different tubes and balls, rendered a harmonious sound: and all the guests performing the same operation at the same time, made a concert of a very new and pleasant sort. I know not whether the

same customs are still observed in that country; every thing changes, and every thing may be there changed; but if in those cantons there be yet any persons of the olden times, like me, they may perhaps be glad to have this brought to their recollection.

Count Lantieri was very well satisfied with my father, for he was greatly recovered, and almost completely cured; his kindness was also extended to me, and, to procure amusement for me, he caused a puppetshow, which was almost abandoned, and which was very rich in figures and decorations, to be refitted.

I profited by this, and amused the company by giving them a piece of a great man, expressly composed for wooden comedians. This was the Sneezing of Hercules, by Peter-James Martelli, a Bolognese.

This celebrated man was the only person who could have left us a complete theatre, if he had not possessed the folly of attempting a new species of versification for the Italians; verses of fourteen syllables, and rimed by couplets nearly like the French verses.

I shall speak of these Martellian verses in the second part of these Memoirs; for notwithstanding their proscription, I took it into my head to be pleased with them fifty years after the death of their author.

Martelli published, in six volumes, dramatical

sum of money, adding a very pretty box with his portrait, and a silver watch for myself. A young man in those times was glad to have a silver watch, and now the laqueys will not deign to carry them.

On taking post at Gorizia, I requested my father to prefer the road by Palma Nova, which I had not seen; but, in fact, my object was to avoid going through Udine, where, from the last adventure, I was in dread of some disagreeable rencounter. My father consented without any suspicion, and we arrived at the first dining station.

Palma, or Palma Nova, is one of the strongest and most considerable fortresses of Europe. It belongs to the Venetians, and is the rampart of their possessions on the side of Germany.

The fortifications are so well regulated, and so well executed, that strangers go to see them through curiosity, as a chef-d'œuvre of military architecture.

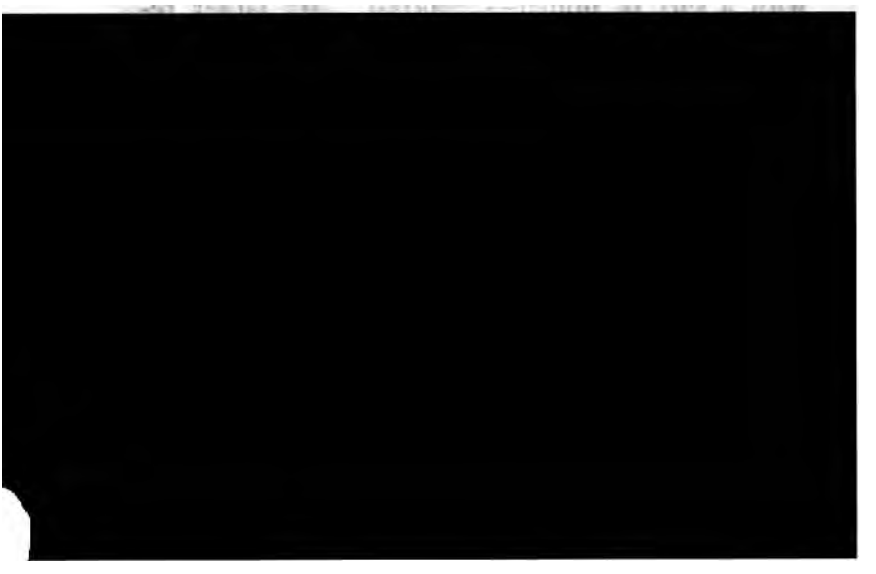
The republic of Venice sends a proveditor-general to Palma to govern it. He presides over civil, criminal, and military affairs, and he gives a daily account to the senate of every thing interesting to the government.

We paid a visit to the Proveditor-General, whom my father had known at Venice. This worthy senator received us with much kindness; he had seen my Easter poetry, on which he complimented me; but looking at me with an arch

smile, he told me that the sermons of Father Catanco did not seem to have greatly contributed to my sanctity, giving me to understand that he was acquainted with my late imprudence, which was by no means difficult on account of the short distance between the places. I blushed a little; my father perceived it, and afterwards demanded the meaning of the allusion. I told him I was altogether ignorant, and he pressed the matter no further. We supped with his excellency, and set out next day.

On approaching the Taillamento, which we had to repass, we were told that this torrent was terribly swollen, and that it was impossible to cross it. As we were not far from Udine, my father proposed to wait patiently in that town till the river should subside into its natural state. I dreaded Udine, and endeavoured to start difficulties and obstacles. My father kept insisting, and I kept urging new reasons. My father grew impatient; we alighted at an inn, where we were served with a sort of dinner—breakfast. My father reflecting on the allusions of the General of Palma, and the reason urged by me for not going through Udine, pressed me so hard, that I was obliged to tell him as modestly as I could all that had happened to me. He enjoyed the adventure of Theresa, and advised me to profit by it in distrusting suspected women; but when we came to the

daughter of the lemonade vender, he pointed out my errors more like a friend than a father, and drew tears from me. Fortunately we were informed that the Tailamento was become fordable, and we resumed our journey.



CHAP. VII.

My Return to Chiozza—My Departure for Modena—Frightful Spectacle—My Vapours—My Cure at Venice—Still at Chiozza—Absence of my younger Brother—My new Employment—Anecdote of a Nun and a Boarder—My Arrival at Feltre—Company of Comedians—Private Theatre—My first comic Works—My Amours.

On our arrival at Chiozza, we were received as a mother receives her dear son, as a wife receives her dear husband after a long absence. I was delighted to see again that virtuous mother, who was so tenderly attached to me; after having been seduced and deceived, I required to be beloved. This was another sort of love; but till I could relish the pleasures of a respectable and agreeable passion, I found my consolation in maternal love; my mother and myself were very partial to each other; but how different the love of a mother for her son from that of a son for his mother! Children love from gratitude; but mothers love by a natural impulse, and self-love has not a less share in their tender friendship; they love the fruits of their conjugal union, conceived by them with satisfaction, carried by them with pain in their bosom, and brought into the world with so much suffering. They have seen them grow up from day to day;

they have enjoyed the first display of their innocence: they have been accustomed to see them, to love them, to watch over them ..... I am even disposed to believe that the last reason is the strongest of all, and that a mother would not be less fond of a child changed at nurse than of her own, provided she had *bond fide* received it for her own, had taken care of its first education, and been accustomed to caress and cherish it.

This is a digression foreign to these memoirs, but I like to gossip occasionally; and without hunting for fine things, nothing interests me more than the analysis of the human heart.—But to resume the thread of our discourse.

My father received a letter from his cousin Zavarisi, a notary, at Modena, to the following import—

The duke had renewed an antient edict by which every possessor of rents and real property was prohibited from absenting himself from his dominions without permission, and these permissions cost a great deal.

M. Zavarisi added in his letter, that as my views respecting Milan had failed, it would be advisable for my father to send me to Modena, in which there was a university as at Pavia, where I might finish my legal studies, receive a licence, and afterwards be entered as an advocate!—This worthy relation, who was sincerely attached to us, put my father in mind that his ancestors had

always held distinguished places in the duchy of Modena; that I might revive the antient credit of our family, and, at the same time, save the expense of a permission, which would require to be renewed every two years. He concluded with telling us that he would take care of my person, and that he would see that I should be comfortably and respectably boarded. In a postcript he mentioned that he had a good marriage in view for me.

This letter gave rise to endless reasonings for and against, between my father and mother. The master, however, carried the point, and it was decided that I should instantly depart with the courier of Modena.

At Venice there are couriers who travel and couriers who do not travel. The former are called Couriers of Rome, as they ordinarily go only to Rome and Milan, though at other times they are dispatched wherever the republic may want them. Their number is fixed at thirty-two, and they enjoy a certain consideration in the community.

But with respect to the other couriers, the case is very different; they are merely conductors of packet boats, paid by those who respectively farm them. They are enabled, however, to improve their fortune, by availing themselves of nooks in their boats for the concealment of parcels.

These packet boats, which are five in number, are very convenient. They set out for Ferrara, Bologna, Modena, Mantua, and Florence; the

passengers are boarded in various styles according to their wishes, and the price is very moderate.

There is but one trifling inconvenience, that in the same voyage the bark is three times changed. Every state through which the couriers pass, claims the right of employing their own boats and crew, and the different contiguous states have never fallen upon an arrangement favourable for the common interest, without incommoding passengers. I could wish the masters of the Po to read my memoirs, and to profit by my advice.

I entered the packet boat of Modena; we were fourteen passengers: our conductor, named Bastia, was a very aged and spare man, of a severe physiognomy, but a very respectable man, and even devout withal.

We took our first dinner all of us together, at the inn, where the master procured the necessary provisions for our supper, which was to be taken on our passage.

At night-fall, two lamps diffused a light everywhere, and the courier then made his appearance in the midst of us with a chaplet in his hands, and begged and exhorted us very politely to recite along with him aloud, a third part of a rosary, and the litanies of the Virgin.

We all gave our assent to the pious request of the good man Bastia, and ranged ourselves in two rows to divide the pater-nosters and ave-marias, which we recited with becoming devotion.

In a corner of the boat there were three of our travellers who sat with their hats on, and kept laughing and mimicking us. Bastia having perceived this, requested the three gentlemen to observe good manners at least, if they were not disposed to be devout. The three unknown persons on this laughed full in his face. The courier was vexed, but said nothing further, as he knew not whom he had to do with; but a sailor who recognized them, told the courier they were three Jews. Bastia's fury exceeded all bounds, and he cried out like a mad person: "What! you are Jews, and at dinner you ate bacon!"

At this unexpected sally, every body began to laugh, and the Jews as well as the rest. The courier continued; "I pity those who are so unfortunate as not to know our religion; but I despise those who observe none—You ate bacon, you are knaves."—The jews in a fury threw themselves on the courier: we took the reasonable part of defending him, and we forced the Israelites to keep by themselves.

Our rosary thus interrupted, was postponed to the following day. We supped with tolerable gaiety, and we went to sleep on our little mattresses. Nothing extraordinary took place during the remainder of the voyage.

On approaching Modena, Bastia asked me, where I meant to lodge? I knew not myself, as M. Zavarisi was to find me out a boarding-house.

Bastia requested me to board with him; he was acquainted with M. Zavarisi, and he flattered himself that it would meet with his approbation. This was actually the case; and I went to lodge with the courier.

It was a most sanctified house: father, sons, daughters, daughter-in-law, and children, were all possessed of the greatest devotion. I found no amusement with them; but as they were honest people, who lived prudently and tranquilly, I was very well pleased with their attentions; and people are always estimable when they fulfil their social duties.

My cousin Zavarisi, well pleased to have me beside him, first presentsd me to the rector of the university, and took me afterwards to the house of a celebrated advocate of the country, where I was to become acquainted with the practice of the law, and where I instantly took my place.

In this study there was a nephew of the celebrated Muratori, who procured me the acquaintance of his uncle, a man of universal talents, who was an honour to his nation and age, and who would have been cardinal, if he had been less strenuous in his writings, in favour of the house of Este.

My new companion shewed me every thing most curious in the town: and, among other things, the Ducal Palace, which was extremely beautiful and magnificent, and which contained the valuable collection of pictures then at Modena, but since

purchased by the king of Poland for the sum of a hundred thousand sequins.

I was curious to see the famous bucket, the subject of the *Secchia Rappita* of Tassoni: I saw it in the steeple of the cathedral, where it is suspended by an iron chain. I contrived to amuse myself tolerably well; and I believe the residence at Modena would have suited me well, both on account of the literary societies which abound there, and on account of the spectacles which are very frequent, and the hope which I had of repairing my losses.

But a frightful scene which I witnessed a few days after my arrival, a horrible ceremony, a piece of pomp of religious jurisdiction, struck me so much, that my mind was troubled and my senses agitated!

I saw in the middle of a crowd of people, a scaffold elevated to the height of five feet, on which a man appeared with his head uncovered and his hands tied. This was an abbé of my acquaintance, an enlightened literary man, a celebrated poet, well known and highly esteemed in Italy; it was the Abbé J**** B**** V**** One monk held a book in his hand; another interrogated the sufferer, who answered haughtily. The spectators clapped with their hands, and encouraged him: the reproaches augmented; the man subjected to this piece of degradation trembled with rage: I could bear the scene no longer. I

went off in a state of thoughtfulness and agitation, and quite stunned ; my vapours instantly attacked me: I returned home, and shut myself up in my room, plunged in the most dismal and humiliating reflections for humanity.

" Good God !" said I to myself, " to what are we subject in this short life, which we are obliged to drag out ? Here is a man accused of uttering indecent language to a woman who had been taking the sacrament. Who denounced him ? The woman herself. Heavens ! is not misfortune alone a sufficient punishment ?"

I passed in review all the events which had happened to me, and which might have turned out dangerous : the patient of Chiozza, the waiting-maid, and the daughter of the lemonade vender of Friuli, the satire of Pavia, and other faults with which I had to reproach myself.

Whilst I was indulging my sad reveries, Father Bastia knowing of my return, came to propose to me to join his family in reciting the rosary. I required something to relieve my mind, and I accepted the proposal with pleasure. I said my rosary with devotion, and I found my consolation in it.

Supper was served up, and the Abbé V**** was spoken of. I marked the horror which I felt for that spectacle ; my host, who was of the secular society of that jurisdiction, considered the ceremony superb and exemplary. I asked him, how the spectacle terminated ? He told me, that his pride

had at length been humbled; that his obstinacy had at length yielded; that he was obliged to avow with a loud voice all his crimes, to recite a formula of retractation presented to him, and that he was condemned to six years imprisonment.

The terrible aspect of this man, under his ignominious treatment never quitted me. I saw no one; I went to mass every day with Bastia: I went to sermon and to prayers with him; he was quite contented with me, and endeavoured to nourish in me that unction which appeared in my actions and my discourse, by accounts of visions, miracles, and conversions.

My resolution was taken, and I was firmly resolved to enter the order of Capuchins. I wrote to my father a very laboured letter, which, however, was destitute of common sense. I requested his permission to renounce the world, and envelope myself in a cowl. My father, who was no fool, took care not to oppose me: he flattered me a great deal; he seemed satisfied with the inspiration which I displayed, and merely begged me to join him immediately on the receipt of his letter, promising me that he himself and my mother wished for nothing more than to see me satisfied.

At sight of this answer, I prepared for my departure. Bastia, who did not that day take the charge of the bark for Venice, recommended me to his comrade, who was to perform the voyage.

I bade adieu to the devout family; I begged to be remembered in their prayers, and I parted from them under the workings of contrition.

On arriving at Chiozza, my dear parents received me with endless caresses. I asked their benediction, which they gave me with tears; and I spoke of my project, which they did not disapprove. My father proposed to take me with him to Venice; but this I refused with all the frankness of devotion. On his telling me, however, that it was to present me to the guardian of the Capuchins, I willingly consented.

We went to Venice, where we visited our relations and friends, dining with some and supping with others. They deceived me. I was taken to the play, and in fifteen days there was no longer any thought of the cloister. My vapours were dissipated, and I was restored to reason. I pitied always the man whom I saw on the scaffold; but I discovered that it was not necessary to renounce the world to avoid it.

My father took me back to Chiozza, and my mother, who was pious without being bigoted, was very glad to see me in my usual state. I became still more dear and interesting to her on account of the absence of her youngest son.

My brother, who had always been destined for the army, was sent to Zara, the capital of Dalmatia; he was consigned to M. Visinoni, a cousin of my

mother, and a captain of dragoons, and adjutant to the proveditor-general of that province, which belongs to the republic of Venice.

This brave officer, whom all the generals who succeeded to the command of Zara wished to have beside them, took the charge of my brother's education, and afterwards placed him in his regiment.

For my part, I knew not what was to become of me. At the age of twenty-one, I had experienced so many reverses; so many singular catastrophes had happened to me, and so many troublesome events, that I no longer flattered myself with any thing, and saw no other resource in my mind than the dramatic art, which I was still fond of, and which I should long before have entered into, if I had been master of my own will.

My father, however, vexed to see me the sport of fortune, did not allow himself to be cast down by those circumstances, which began to wear a serious aspect both for him and me. He had been at a considerable and useless expense to give me a profession, and he could have wished to procure me a respectable and lucrative employment, which should cost him nothing. This was not so easily to be found: he did find one however, and so much to my taste, that I forgot all the losses which I had sustained, and I had nothing further to regret.

The republic of Venice sends a noble Venetian for governor to Chiozza, with the title of *Podestà*, who takes with him a chancellor for criminal mat-

ters; an office which corresponds with that of *lieutenant-criminel* in France; and this criminal-chancellor must have an assistant in his office, with the title of *Coadjutor*.

These appointments are more or less lucrative, according to the country in which they are situated; but they are all very agreeable, as the holders of them are admitted to the governor's table, are in his excellency's party, and see every person of distinction in the place. However small the labour, it turns out pretty well.

My father enjoyed the protection of the governor, who was, at that time, the noble Francis Bonfadini. He was also very much connected with the criminal-chancellor, and well acquainted with the coadjutor. In short, he procured my appointment as adjunct to the latter.

The period of the Venetian government is fixed; the governors are changed every sixteen months. When I entered my place, four months had only elapsed. Besides, I was a supernumerary, and could not pretend to any kind of emoluments; but I enjoyed all the pleasures of society, a good table, abundance of play, concerts, balls and fêtes. It is a charming employment: but as they are not regular offices, and as the governor can give the commission to whomsoever he pleases, there are some of their chancellors who languish in inaction, and others who pass over the rest, and have no time to repose themselves. It is personal merit which

brings them into repute; but most frequently protections carry the day.

I was aware of the necessity of securing a reputation to myself; and in my quality of supernumerary, I took every means of instructing myself, and making myself useful. The coadjutor was not too fond of employment; I assisted him as much as possible; and at the end of a few months I had become as competent as himself. The chancellor was not long in perceiving it; and he gave me thorny commissions without their passing through the channel of his coadjutor, which I was fortunate enough to execute to his satisfaction.

Criminal procedure is a very interesting lesson for the knowledge of human nature. The guilty individual endeavours to clear himself of his crime, or to diminish the horror of it: he is either artful by nature, or becomes so through fear: he knows that he has to do with intelligent persons, with professional people, and yet he does not despair to deceive them.

The law has prescribed to criminals certain forms of interrogation, which must be followed, lest the demands should be captious, and lest weakness or ignorance should be surprised. However, it is necessary to know a little, or endeavour to conjecture the character and mind of the man about to be examined; and observing a medium between rigour and humanity, an endeavour is

made to discover the truth without constraining the individual.

What interested me the most, was the review of the procedure, and the report which I prepared for my chancellor; for on those reviews and reports the situation, honour, and life of a man frequently depends. The accused are defended—the matter is discussed; but the report produces the first impression. Woe to those who draw up reviews without knowledge, and reports without reflection.

Do not say, my dear reader, that I am puffing myself off; you see when I commit imprudent actions, I do not spare myself; and I must be requited when I am pleased with myself.

The sixteen months' residence of the Podesta drew to a close. Our criminal-chancellor was already retained for Feltre, and he proposed to me the place of principal coadjutor, if I would follow him. Charmed with this proposition, I took a suitable time to speak of it to my father; and next day an engagement was concluded between us.

Here I was at length settled. Hitherto I had looked only on employments at a distance; but now I held one which pleased and suited me. I resolved with myself never to quit it; but man proposes, and God disposes.

On the departure of our governor from Chiozza, all were eager to show him every sort of honour; and the wits of the town, or those who thought

themselves such, had a literary assembly, in which the illustrious person, by whom they had been governed, was celebrated both in verse and prose.

I sung also all the sorts of glory of the hero of the festival, and I expatiated at great length on the virtues and personal qualities of the governor's lady; both of them had shown a kindness for me; and at Bergamo, where I saw them in office some time afterwards, as well as at Venice when his excellency was decorated with the rank of Senator, they always continued to honour me with their protection.

Every body went away, and I remained at Chiozza till M. Zabottini (this was the name of the chancellor) called me to Venice for the journey to Feltre. I had always cultivated the acquaintance of the nuns of Saint Francis, where there were charming boarders; the Lady B*** had one under her direction, who was very beautiful, very rich, and very amiable; she would have pleased me infinitely, but my age, my situation, and my fortune forbade me to flatter myself with the idea: the nun however did not despair; and when I called on her, she never failed to send for the young lady to the parlour. I felt that I was becoming seriously attached; the directress seemed satisfied; I did not comprehend her: I spoke to her one day of my inclination and my fear; and she encouraged me and confided the secret to me. This lady possessed merit and property; but there

was a stain on her birth. "However, this small defect is nothing," said the lady with the veil; "the girl is prudent and well educated; and I answer for her character and conduct. She has," she continued, "a guardian, who must be gained over; but let me alone for that. This guardian, who is very old, and very infirm, has, it is true, some pretensions to his ward; but he is in the wrong, and.....as I stand for something in this business.....let me alone, I say again; I shall arrange things for the best."

I own, from this discourse, this confidence, and this encouragement, I began to believe myself fortunate. Miss N*** did not look upon me with an unfavourable eye, and I reckoned the affair as good as concluded.

The whole convent perceived my inclination for the boarder, and there were ladies acquainted with the intrigues of the parlour who took pity on me, and informed me of what was passing. They did it in this way.

The windows of my room were exactly opposite to the steeple of the convent; several apertures were contrived in its construction, through which the figures of those who approached them were confusedly seen. I had several times observed figures and signs at these apertures, and I learned in time that those signs marked the letters of the alphabet, that words were formed of them, and that a conversation could thus be carried on at a distance. I had

almost every day a quarter of an hour of this mute conversation, which was of a discreet and decorous nature.

By means of this manual alphabet, I learned that Miss N*** was on the point of being married to her guardian. Indignant at the proceedings of Lady B***, I called on her after dinner, determined to display my resentment. I demanded to see her; she came, and on looking steadily at me, perceived that I was chagrined, and dexterously took care not to give me time to speak; she began the attack herself with a sort of vigour and a degree of vehemence.

"Very well, sir," said she; "you are displeased, I see by your countenance." I wished to speak then, but she would not listen to me; she raised her voice, and continued: "Yes, sir, Miss N*** is to be married, and her guardian is to marry her." I wished to speak loud in my turn. "Silence, silence," cried she; "listen to me: this marriage is my contrivance; I have, after mature consideration, been induced to second it, and it was for you that I solicited it."—"For me!" said I.—"Yes; silence," said she, "and you shall see the design of an honest woman, who is attached to you. Are you," continued she, "in a situation to marry?—No, for a hundred reasons. Would the lady have waited your convenience?—No, for it was not in her power: she must have married; a young man would have married her, and you

would have lost her for ever. Now she is to be married to an old man, to a valetudinary, who cannot live long; and, though I am unacquainted with the pleasures and inconveniences of marriage, I know this much, that a young wife must shorten the days of an old husband; you will receive a pretty widow who has been a wife merely in name; on that subject you may rest contented: she will even be better off, for she will be richer than she is at present; and in the mean time you can go on in your own way. Fear nothing on her account; no, my dear friend, fear nothing; she will mix in the world with her dotard, but I shall watch over her conduct. Yes, yes, she is yours; I pledge myself for that; I give you my word of honour."

Miss N*** now made her appearance, and approached the grate. The directress said to me, with a mysterious air, "Compliment miss on her marriage." I could hold out no longer. I made my bow, and went away without saying a word.

I never saw either the directress or the boarder again; and happily, I soon forgot both of them.

As soon as I received the letter directing me to repair to Feltre, I set out from Chiozza, accompanied by my father, and went to Venice to be introduced along with him to his Excellency Paolo Spinelli, a noble Venetian, the podestà or governor, whom I was to follow. We also called on Chancellor Zabottini, under whose orders I was to labour. I left Venice in a few days afterwards, and

in forty-eight hours I reached the place of my residence. Feltre or Feltri is a town situated in the Marcia Trevigiana, a province of the republic of Venice, sixty leagues from the capital. It contains a bishoprick and a numerous nobility.

The town is mountainous and steep, and so completely covered with snow during the whole winter, that, from the doors in the narrow streets being choked up with snow and ice, they are obliged to make their way out at the windows. The following Latin verse is ascribed to Cæsar:

Feltria perpetuo nivium damnata rigori.

Having arrived there before my colleagues for the purpose of receiving from my predecessor the archives and other papers, I was very agreeably surprised to learn that there was a company of comedians in the town, who had been invited by the old governor, and who intended giving a few representations on the arrival of the new.

This company was under the direction of Charles Veronese, the same who, thirty years afterwards, came to Paris to play the character of Pantaloon at the Italian Theatre, and who brought the beautiful Coralina and the charming Camilla, his daughters, along with him.

The company was not amiss; the director, notwithstanding his glass-eye, played the principal inamorato; and I saw with pleasure the same

Florindo dei Macaroni whom I knew at Rimini, and who, on account of his age, only acted the characters of kings in tragedy and noble fathers in comedy.

Four days afterwards the governor arrived, and the chancellor and another officer of justice with the title of Vicar, who here, and in several other provinces of the state of Venice, has a voice along with the Podestà in sentences and judgments.

I laid aside for several months every idea of pleasure and amusement, and applied seriously to labour, as, after this second government in which I acted as coadjutor, I could aspire to a chancellorship. I examined into the papers in the Chancery, among which I found a commission from the Senate that my predecessors had neglected. I gave an account of it to my principal, who judged the affair of an interesting nature, and charged me to follow it through with all my abilities.

This was a criminal procedure on account of timber cut down in the forests of the republic; and there were two hundred persons implicated in the crime. This required an examination on the spot, to ascertain the *corpus delicti*. I went myself with surveyors and guards across rocks, torrents, and precipices. The procedure occasioned a great noise, and threw every one into consternation; for the wood had been cut down with impunity for more than twenty years, and there was reason to apprehend a revolt, which might have fallen on

the poor devil of a coadjutor who roused the sleeping lion.

Fortunately, this great affair terminated something in the same way as the parturition of the mountain. The republic was satisfied with securing its wood for the future. The chancellor lost nothing, and the coadjutor was indemnified for his fears.

I was entrusted some time afterwards with another commission of a much more agreeable and amusing nature. This was to carry through an investigation ten leagues from the town, into the circumstances of a dispute where fire-arms had been made use of, and dangerous wounds received. As the country where this happened was flat, and the road lay through charming estates and country-houses, I engaged several of my friends to follow me; we were in all twelve, six males and six females, and four domestics. We all rode on horseback, and we employed twelve days in this delicious expedition. During all this time we never dined and supped in the same place; and for twelve nights we never slept on beds.

We went very frequently on foot along delightful roads bordered with vines, and shaded with fig-trees, breakfasting on milk, and sometimes sharing the ordinary fare of the peasants, which is a soup composed of Turkey corn called polenta, and of which we made most delicious toasts.

Wherever we went, we saw nothing but fêtes,

rejoicings, and entertainments; and at every place where we stopped in the evening, we had balls the whole night through, in which the ladies played their part as well as the men.

In this party there were two sisters, one married and the other single. The latter was very much to my liking, and I may say, I made the party for her alone. She was as prudent and modest as her sister was headstrong and foolish: the singularity of our journey afforded us an opportunity of coming to an explanation, and we became lovers.

My investigation was concluded in two hours; we selected another road for our return to vary our pleasure; but on our arrival at Feltre, we were all worn out, exhausted, and more dead than alive. I felt the effects for a month, and my poor Angelica had a fever of forty days.

The six gentlemen of our party proposed another species of entertainment to me. In the palace of the governor there was a theatre, which they wished to put to some use; and they did me the honour to tell me that they had conceived the project on my account, and they left me the power of choosing the pieces and distributing the characters.

I thanked them, and accepted the proposition, and with the approbation of his excellency and my chancellor, I put myself at the head of this new entertainment.

I could have wished something comic, but I was not fond of buffoonery, and there were no good comedies; I therefore gave the preference to tragedy. As the operas of Metastasio were then represented every where even without music, I put the airs into recitative; I endeavoured as well as I could to approximate the style of that charming author; and I made choice of *Didone* and *Siroe* for our representation. I distributed the parts according to the characters of my actors, whom I knew, and I reserved the worst for myself. In this I acted wisely, for I was completely unsuited for tragedy.

Fortunately, I had composed two small pieces in which I played two parts of character, and redeemed my reputation. The first of these pieces was the Good Father, and the second *la Canta trice*. Both were approved of, and my acting was considered passable for an amateur. I saw the last of these pieces some time afterwards at Venice, where a young advocate thought proper to give it out as his own work, and to receive compliments on the subject; but having been imprudent enough to publish it with his name, he experienced the mortification of seeing his plagiarism unmasked.

I did what I could to engage my beautiful Angelica to accept a part in our tragedies, but it was impossible; she was timid, and had she even been willing, her parents would not have given their permission. She visited us; but this pleasure cost

her tears; for she was jealous, and suffered much from seeing me on such a familiar footing with my fair companions.

The poor little girl loved me with tenderness and sincerity, and I loved her also with my whole soul; I may say she was the first person whom I ever loved. She aspired to become my wife, which she would have been, if certain singular reflections, that however were well founded, had not turned me from the design.

Her elder sister had been remarkably beautiful; and, after her first child, she became ugly. The youngest had the same skin and the same features; she was one of those delicate beauties whom the air injures, and whom the smallest fatigue or pain discomposes; of all which I saw a convincing proof. The fatigue of our journey produced a visible change upon her; I was young; and if my wife were in a short time to have lost her bloom, I foresaw what would have been my despair.

This was reasoning curiously for a lover; but whether from virtue, weakness, or inconstancy, I quitted Feltre without marrying her.

CHAP. VIII.

Moral Reflections—My Father's change of Residence—My Embarkation for Ferrara—Unpleasant Adventure—My Arrival at Bagnacavallo—Short Journey to Faenza—Death of my Father—My Doctor's Degree—Singularities which preceded it—My Reception in the Corps of Advocates—My Presentation at Court—Dialogue between a Woman and myself.

I HAD some difficulty in tearing myself from the charming object with whom I first tasted the charms of virtuous love. It must be owned, however, that this love was not of a very vigorous description, as I could quit my mistress. A little more mind and grace would perhaps have fixed me; but she possessed beauty alone; and even that beauty seemed to me on its decline. I had time for reflection, and my self-love was stronger than my passion.

I required something to divert my thoughts from the subject, and several circumstances occurred calculated to produce this effect. My father, who could never settle in one place (a propensity which he left as an inheritance to his son), had changed his country. In returning from Modena, whither he went on family affairs, he passed through Ferrara, and there he received a very ad-

vantageous offer of being settled as a physician at Bagnacavallo, with a fixed income. This was a favourable proposition, and he accepted it; and it was arranged that I should join him there the very first opportunity my situation would admit of.

On leaving Feltre, I passed through Venice without stopping, and embarked with the courier of Ferrara. In the bark there were numbers of people, but they were very ill assorted. Among others, there was a meagre and pale young man with black hair, a broken voice, and a sinister physiognomy, the son of a butcher of Padua, who set up for a great man. This gentleman grew weary, and invited every body to play; nobody, however, would listen to him, and I had the honour of taking him up. He proposed at first pharo on a small scale, tête-a-tête, but this the courier would not have permitted. We played at a child's game, called *cala-carte*, in which he who has the greatest number of cards at the end of the game gains a fish, and he who has the greatest number of spades gains another. I lost my cards always, and never had any spades: at thirty sous the fish, he contrived to obtain from me two sequins; I suspected him, but I paid my money without saying any thing.

On arriving at Ferrara, I had need of repose, and I went to lodge at the hotel of St. Mark, where the post-horses were kept. While I was dining alone in my room, I received a visit from

my gambler, who came to offer me my revenge. On my refusing, he laughed at me, and drawing from his pocket a pack of cards, and a handful of sequins, he proposed pharo to me, which I still, however, refused.

"Come, come, Sir," said he; "I owe you your revenge. I am an honest man, willing to give it you; and you cannot refuse me. You don't know me:" he continued—"To set your mind at ease with respect to me, there are the cards; hold you the bank and I shall punt." The proposition seemed to me fair; I was not yet cunning enough to suspect the tricks of this sleight-of-hand gentry; I believed in good earnest that chance would decide the business, and that I had an opportunity of recovering my money.

I drew ten sequins from my purse, as an equivalent for those of my antagonist, and I mixed the cards and gave him them to cut. He laid two punts, which I gained, and on which I was as frisky as a harlequin. I shuffled again, and gave the cards to him to cut: my gentleman doubled his stake and gained; he made paroli: this paroli decided the bank, and I could not refuse to hold it. I held it accordingly, and I gained. On this he swore like a trooper, took up the cards, which had fallen on the table, counted them, found an odd card, and maintained there was a false deal. He attempted to seize my money, which I defended. He then drew a pistol from his pocket; and I started back

and let go my sequins. On hearing my plaintive and trembling voice, a waiter of the hotel, leagued in all probability with the cheat, made his appearance, and announced to us that we had both incurred the most rigorous penalties denounced against games of hazard, and threatened to inform against us instantly, if we refused to give him some money. I was not long in giving him a sequin for myself, and I took post instantly, enraged at having lost my money, and still more at having allowed myself to be swindled.

On arriving at Bagnacavallo, I was consoled with the sight of my dear parents. My father had had an attack of a mortal disease, and his only regret was, as he said, lest he should die without seeing me. Alas! he saw me, and I saw him; but this reciprocal pleasure lasted but a very short time.

Bagnacavallo is merely a large village, in the legation of Ravenna, very rich, very fertile, and very commercial.

After introducing me into the best society of this place, my father, as an additional gratification for me, took me to Faenza. In this town was first discovered the sort of argillous matter mixed with potter's-earth and sand, of which the glazed earth is composed which the Italians call *majolica*, the French *fayence*, and the English delf ware.

In Italy a number of delf plates were painted by Rafaelle d'Urbino, or by his pupils. These

plates are framed in an elegant style, and preserved with great care in picture cabinets. I saw a very abundant and very rich collection of them at Venice, in the Grimani Palace at Santa Maria Formosa.

Faenza is a very pretty town of Romagna, but there is nothing remarkable to be seen in it. We were very well received and treated by the Marquis Spada: we saw several comedies performed by a strolling company, and in six days we returned to Bagnacavallo.

A few days afterwards, my father fell sick. It was a year since he had been seized with his last disease: he perceived, on taking to bed, that the relapse was serious, and his pulse announced his danger to him. His fever became malignant on the seventh day, and grew worse and worse every hour. When he saw himself near his latter end, he called me to his bed-side, and recommending his dear wife to my protection, bade me adieu, and gave me his blessing. He sent immediately for his confessor, and received the sacrament. On the fourteenth day my father was no more. He was buried in the church of St. Jerome of Bagnacavallo, the 9th March, 1731.

I will not dwell here on the firmness of a virtuous father, the grief of a tender wife, and the sensibility of a beloved and grateful son, but shall merely give you a rapid sketch of the most cruel moments of my life. The loss was keenly felt by

me, and it occasioned an essential change in my situation and family.

I endeavoured to console my mother, and she in turn endeavoured to comfort me: we required the assistance of each other. Our first care was to leave the place and return to my maternal aunt at Venice, and we lodged with her in the house of one of our relations, where fortunately there were apartments to let.

During the whole journey from Romagna to Venice my mother did nothing but speak of my chancery-employment on the main land, which she called a gipsy occupation, for it was necessary to be on the spot, and to be perpetually changing from country to country. She wished to live along with me, to see me occupied sedentarily beside her, and she conjured and solicited me with tears in her eyes to embrace the profession of an advocate. On my arrival at Venice, all our friends joined my mother in the same wish; I resisted as long as I could, but was at last obliged to yield.

Did I act wisely? Will my mother long enjoy her son?—She had every reason to think so; but my stars perpetually thwarted every one of my projects. Thalia expected me in her temple, she led me to it through many a crooked path, and made me endure the thorns and the briars before yielding me any of the flowers.

As I was on the point of appearing in my gown in the courts of law, where a few years before I appeared without one, I called on my uncle Indric with whom I acquired my knowlegde of law-practice. He was glad to see me again, and assured me of his endeavours in my behalf. I had great difficulties however to surmount.

To be received Advocate at Venice, the first step is to be licenced by the University of Padua; and to obtain the licence, a course of civil law in that town, must be gone through, five consecutive years must be passed there, and the certificates of attendance at all the different classes of the public schools must be produced. Strangers alone can present themselves in the college, defend their theses, and receive their licence on the spot without delay.

I belonged by descent to Modena; but as both my father and myself were born in Venice, was I entitled to the advantage of strangers? I know not, but a letter written by order of the Duke of Modena to his minister at Venice, procured me a place in the privileged class.

I was thus enabled to repair instantly to Padua and receive my degree of doctor; but a new and still more serious difficulty now occurred. The Venetian code is alone followed at the bar of Venice; and Bartolus, Baldus, and Justinian are never cited. They are scarcely known there; but they must be known at Padua. It is the same at

Venice as at Paris,—young men lose their time in a useless study.

I had lost my time like other people; I had studied the Roman law at Pavia, Udine, and Modena; but then for four years this study had been interrupted, and every trace of the Imperial law was lost. I saw myself therefore under the necessity of becoming once more a scholar.

I applied to one of my old friends M. Radi, whom I knew in my infancy, and who having employed his time much better than myself, was become a good advocate, and an excellent master for the instruction of the candidates who frequent Padua only four times a-year to show themselves and obtain their certificates of attendance. M. Radi was a worthy man, but, from being fond of play, he was rather embarrassed in his circumstances. His scholars profited by his lessons, and frequently carried his money as well as his instructions away with them.

When M. Radi thought me sufficiently prepared for a public exhibition, we set out together for Padua. I own that notwithstanding the instruction which I had received, and a certain confidence acquired in my intercourse with the world, I entertained a considerable dread of the grave and solemn countenances by whom I was to be judged. My friend laughed at my apprehensions, and told me I had nothing to fear, that all I had to pass through was nothing but ceremony, and that a

person must be very ignorant indeed who failed to be crowned with the laurels of the university.

On arriving at the city of doctors, we waited first on M. Pighi the civil-law professor, to request him to have the goodness to be my promoter, that is, the person who in quality of assistant, presents and supports the candidates. He acceded to my request, and received with every expression of kindness a silver tea-board of which I made him a present.

We next went to the office of the university to deposit in the hands of the treasurer the sum which the professors divide among themselves. This advance is called a deposit; but it is there as at the theatre, the money is never returned after the drawing of the curtain.

We had visits to pay to all the doctors of the college, and many of them we accomplished with cards; but on calling on the Abbé Arrighi, one of the first professors in the university, the porter had orders to receive us. We found him in his closet, and we paid him the usual compliments of requesting him to honour us with his presence, and to grant us his indulgence. He seemed very much astonished that we should confine ourselves to this dry and useless compliment. We could not comprehend the cause of this; but we afterwards obtained the following information.

A new regulation had been enacted and published by orders of the reformers of the course

of studies at Padua, by which all candidates for a doctor's degree, before appearing in full college, were to undergo a particular examination for the purpose of ascertaining whether they were sufficiently instructed for a public examination.

It was M. Arrighi himself, who, seeing that this public examination of candidates was treated as a mere farce, that the indolence of youth was too much encouraged, that questions were selected at pleasure, that even the arguments were communicated and the answers furnished, and that they made only doctors without doctrine, thought proper in the excess of his zeal to solicit and obtain this famous regulation which would have destroyed the university of Padua, had it been long enforced.

I had therefore to go through this examination, and the Abbé Arrighi was to be my examiner. He requested M. Radi to retire into his library, and he began immediately to interrogate me. He was by no means disposed to spare me, but wandered from the code of Justinian to the canons of the Church, and from the Digests to the Pandects. I always however gave an answer of one kind or another, though perhaps I was more often wrong than right; but I displayed a tolerable degre of knowledge and a great deal of confidence. My examinator, who was very strict and scrupulous, was by no means fully satisfied with me, and wished me to prolong my studies; but I told him frankly that I came to Padua to obtain my degree; that

my reputation would be injured, were I to return without one; and that I had made my deposit.—"What" said he, "you have deposited your money?"—"Yes, sir."—"And it was received without my orders?"—"The treasurer received it without hesitation; and here is his receipt."—"So much the worse; you run a risk of losing it.—Have you the courage to venture yourself?"—"Yes, sir, I am determined at all hazards. I would rather renounce for ever my views of becoming an advocate, than return a second time."—"You are very bold."—"Sir, I possess honourable feelings."—"Very well, fix your day, I shall be there; but take care, the most trifling fault will defeat your object."—On this I made my bow and took my leave.

Radi had heard every thing, and was in greater apprehension than myself. I knew that my answers had not been very accurate; but in the college of doctors, the questions are limited, and the candidate is not made to wander through the immense chaos of jurisprudence from one end to the other.

Next day we repaired to the university to see the points which fate should allot me drawn from the urn. The civil-law point turned on intestate successions, and that of the canon-law on bigamy. I was well acquainted with the titles of the one and the chapters of the other; I went over them the same day in the library of Doctor Pighi my

promoter; and I applied myself seriously till the hour of supper.

My friend and myself sat down to table, when five young persons entered the room, and wished to sup with us. This we willingly agreed to, and, after supper, we began to laugh and amuse ourselves. One of the five scholars was a candidate who had been refused in the examination by Professor Arrighi; and he poured forth execrations against that Abbé, who was a Corsican by birth, and satirised his barbarity and the barbarity of his country.

I wished these gentlemen good night; for, as my examination was to take place next day, I required sleep; but they laughed at me, and drew from their pockets a pack of cards, and one of them produced his sequins on the table. Radi was the first to give into the proposition; and the whole night through we played, and Radi and myself lost our money.

We were interrupted by the beadle of the college, who brought me the gown which I was to appear in. The clock of the university summoned me to the examination, which I had to encounter without having closed my eyes, and smarting under the chagrin at the loss of my time and money.

However the exigency required exertion. On my arrival, I was met by my promoter, who took me by the hand, and seated me beside himself on a

balustrade, with a numerous assembly in a semicircle in front of us.

When every person was seated, I rose and began by reciting the usual ceremony and proposing the two theses which I had to defend. One of those deputed to carry on the argumentation attacked me with a syllogism in *barbara* with citations of texts in the major and minor. I resumed the argument, and in the citation of a paragraph I confounded No. 5 with No. 7; my promoter whispered my mistake to me, which I wished to correct. On this M. Arrighi rose from his seat, and said aloud to M. Pighi, "I protest, sir, that I will not suffer the smallest infraction of the laws of the regulation. All assistance to candidates is prohibited at a time like this. It may pass for this time; but I give you warning for the future."

I perceived that this misplaced sally excited universal indignation, and I seized the favourable instant to resume the substance of my thesis, and the propositions of the argument. In place of the scholastic method I substituted learning, reasonings, and the discussions of compilers and interpreters. I gave a dissertation on the whole extent of intestate successions, which met with universal applause; and seeing the success of my boldness, I made an instantaneous transition from the civil to the canon law, and undertook the article of bigamy, which I treated like the other. I

went through the laws of the Greeks and Romans, and cited councils. I was fortunate in the questions which fell to my lot; for I knew them by heart; and on this occasion I acquired an immortal honour. The votes were now taken, and the registrar published the result. I was made a licentiate *nemine penitùs penitùs que discrepante;* that is to say without one dissentient voice, not even that of M. Arrighi, who, on the contrary, was very well satisfied. My promoter then put the doctor's cap on my head, and proceeded to pass an eulogium on the licentiate; but as I did not follow the usual routine he composed Latin prose and verse adapted to the occasion, which was highly honourable both to himself and me.

Every one may enter on the reception of the candidate, and on this occasion I was quite overpowered by the compliments and salutations which I received.

Radi and myself returned to our hotel, very well pleased with the termination of this affair, and very much embarrassed to find ourselves without money. This, however, was a *sine qua non,* and we obtained some without much difficulty, and took our departure exultingly and triumphantly for Venice.

On arriving at Venice, after embracing my mother and aunt, whose joy was excessive, I paid a visit to my uncle the attorney; whom I solicited to obtain a place for me with an advocate for in-

struction in the forms and practice of the bar. My uncle, who was enabled to make a choice, recommended me to M. Terzi, one of the best pleaders and chamber-counsel in the republic, with whom I was to remain two years; but I entered in the month of October 1731, and left him in May 1732; when I was received as an advocate. In all probability they looked merely to the date of the year, and not to that of the month; for I went through the forms in eight months. There was always something extraordinary in all my arrangements, and, to say the truth, almost always to my advantage. I was born lucky, and whenever I have not been so, the fault has been entirely my own.

The advocates at Venice must have their lodgings and be at their chambers, in the quarter *della Roba*. I took apartments at Saint Paternien, and my mother and aunt did not quit me. I equipped myself in my professional gown, the same as that of the patricians, enveloped my head in an immense wig, and waited with great impatience for the day of my presentation in court.

This presentation does not take place without ceremony. The novice must have two assistants, called at Venice *Compari di Palazzo*, whom the the young man selects from among those old advocates who are the most attached to him. I chose M. Uccelli and M. Roberti, both my neighbours.

I went between my two friends to the bottom

of the great stair-case in the great hall of the courts, and for half an hour I was obliged to make so many bows and contortions that my back was almost broken, and my wig resembled the mane of a lion. Every one who passed me, had something to say respecting me; some observed, that I was a lad with some expression in my countenance; others, that I was a new sweeper of the courts; some embraced me, and others laughed in my face. At length I ascended, and sent my servant in quest of a gondola, not daring to make my appearance in the open street in my then equipment, and I appointed him to meet me in the hall of the great council, where I seated myself on a bench, and where I saw every body pass without being seen by any body.

I began to reflect on the profession of which I had made choice. There are generally two hundred and forty advocates in the list at Venice; of these there are from ten to twelve in the first rank, twenty perhaps in the second, and all the rest are obliged to hunt for clients, and the pettyfogging attorneys are willing enough to become their hounds on the condition of sharing together the prey. I was in apprehension for myself, as I was last on the list, and I regretted the chanceries which I had abandoned.

But then, on the other hand, I saw no profession so lucrative and honourable as that of an advocate. A noble Venetian, a patrician, a mem-

ber of the republic, who would not deign to become merchant, banker, notary, physician, or professor of a university, has no hesitation in embracing the profession of an advocate, which he follows in the courts, and he calls the other advocates his brothers. Every thing depended on good fortune: and why was I to be less fortunate than another? The attempt required to be made, and it was incumbent on me to plunge into the chaos of the bar, where perseverance and probity lead to the temple of fortune.

While I was thus musing by myself, and building castles in Spain, I observed a fair, round, and plump woman, of about thirty, advancing towards me, of a tolerable figure, with a flat nose, roguish eyes, a profusion of gold about her neck, ears, arms, and fingers, and in a dress which announced her to be of the inferior orders, but in easy circumstances; she accosted and saluted me.

"Good day, Sir."—"Good day, Madam."—"Will you allow me to pay you my compliments?"—"On what?"—"On your admission; I observed you making your obeisance at court; upon my word, Sir, you are prettily equipped!"—"Am I not? Do you think me handsome?"—"O, the dress is nothing; M. Goldoni becomes every thing."—"So you know me, Madam?"—"Have not I seen you, four years ago, in the land of litigation, in a long peruque and a short robe?"—"You are in the right, when I was with an at-

torney."—"Yes, with M. Indric."—"So you know my uncle then?"—"I? I know every person here, from the Doge to the clerks of court."—"Are you married?"—"No,"—"Are you a widow?"—"No."—"I dare not ask you more."—"You are right."—"Have you any employment?"—"No."—"However, from your appearance.... you seem a decent woman."—"I am so in reality."—"You have a revenue then?"—"None at all."—"But you are well equipped, and how do you live then?"—"I am a girl of the courts, and the courts maintain me."—"Upon my word, that is very singular! You belong to the courts you say?"—"Yes, Sir; my father was employed in them."—"What did he follow?"—"He listened at the doors, and carried good news to those who were in expectation of pardons or sentences, or favourable judgments; and as he had good legs, he was always first with the news. My mother was always here as well as myself; she was not proud, she received money, and accepted of a few commissions. I was born and brought up in these gilded halls, and you see I have gold upon me."—"Your story is very singular; so you follow the footsteps of your mother?"—"No, Sir; I do something else."—"And what is that?"—"I solicit law-suits."—"Solicit law-suits! I do not understand you."—"I am as well known as Barabas: all the advocates and attorneys are well known to be my friends, and many people apply to me to procure

them counsel and defenders. Those who have recourse to me, are not generally rich; and I apply to new comers, to persons without employment, who wish nothing better than to have an opportunity of making themselves known. Do you know, Sir, that, such as you see me, I have made the fortune of a good dozen of the most famous advocates at this bar? Come, Sir, take courage, with your good leave, I shall also be the making of you." I was amused with listening to her; and as my servant did not arrive I continued the conversation.

"Very well, Madam; have you any good affair at present?"—"Yes, Sir, I have several, and some of them excellent; I have a widow suspected of having concealed effects; another anxious that a contract of marriage drawn posterior to its date should be held good; I have girls who demand to be portioned; I have wives who wish a separation; and I have people of condition pursued by their creditors: you see you have only to choose."

"My good woman," said I to her, "I have allowed you to speak, and I wish now to speak in my turn. I am young and entering on my career, and desirous of occasions of employment where I may appear to advantage; but the desire of labour and the itch of pleading will never induce me to undertake such bad causes as those you propose to me."—"Ah, ah!" said she, "you despise my

clients, because I told you there was nothing to be gained; but listen; you shall be well paid, and even paid before hand if you choose." I saw my servant at a distance; I rose, and said to the woman with a firm and determined tone; "No, you are not acquainted with me; I am a man of honour."....She laid hold of my hand, and said with a serious air—"Bravo! continue always to entertain the same sentiments." "Ah, ah," said I to her, "you change your language." "O yes," said she, "and the language which I now use is better than that I have quitted. Our conversation has not been without mystery; bear it in mind, and take care never to mention it. Adieu, Sir, be always prudent, and always honourable, and you will find your account in it." On this, she went away, and I remained lost in astonishment. I could make nothing of the matter, but I afterwards learned that she was a spy; that she came for the purpose of sounding me; but, I never either learned or wished to learn by whom she had been employed.

CHAP. IX.

Fortunate Condition of a good Advocate—Singular Anecdote of a Venetian Advocate—Almanack composed by me—Amalasonte, a Lyrical Tragedy of my composition—My first Pleading—My Adventures with an Aunt and a Niece.

I WAS now an advocate; my introduction to the bar had taken place, and the next thing was to procure clients. I attended every day in court, listening to the masters of the profession, and looking round every where to see if my physiognomy happened to take with any one who might think proper to give me an opportunity of appearing in a cause of appeal. A new advocate cannot shine and show himself off to advantage in the tribunals where causes originate; and it is in the superior courts alone that he can display his science, eloquence, voice, and grace; four means all equally necessary to place an advocate on the first rank at Venice.

My uncle Indric was liberal in his promises, and all my friends were incessantly flattering me; but in the mean time I was obliged to pass the whole of the afternoon and part of the evening in a closet, that I might not lose the first favourable instant.

One of the most essential articles in the profits of a Venetian advocate is derived from consultations. An advocate of the first order is paid for a consultation of not more than three-quarters of an hour at the rate of two and three sequins; and there are sometimes in a cause of consequence not less than twelve, fifteen, and twenty consultations before it is heard by the judge.

If the advocate be employed to write and draw up a demand or an answer in the course of the suit, he receives an immediate payment of from four to six and twelve sequins.

The pleadings are not in writing at Venice; the advocate pleads *vivâ voce*, and his harangue is paid for according to the interest of the cause and the merit of the defender.

All this mounts to something very high: in my moments of solitude and ennui, I used to amuse myself with attempts to calculate it; and as far as I could judge, an advocate in great repute may gain without injuring himself, forty thousand livres *per annum*, a very large sum indeed for a country where living is not half so dear as at Paris.

This brings to my recollection a singular anecdote of one of the most famous advocates of my time.

He was a man whose gains had been very great, and who kept up a respectable establishment at Venice, but he built a superb and elegantly ornamented house in a town of the main land, where he displayed all his pomp and magnificence.

One day when one of his clients called on him on a consultation, and to tell him that he was on the point of setting out for Milan; he was requested by the advocate to order a carriage for him to be sent to his house of V.

The client willingly accepted the commission, which he himself took care to see carried into execution. He sent the coach, which was extremely beautiful, to the place agreed on, without any mention of the price.

On the return of the client to Venice, he repaired with his attorney to the house of his advocate, to consult him on the state of his affairs. In the midst of the conversation, the advocate put him in mind of the coach; he told him he had seen it and was extremely well pleased with it, and he asked him for the bill. The client refused to give it, and requested his defender to accept it as a mark of his friendship and consideration: the advocate thanked him and pretended to insist on payment; but the three-quarters of an hour were elapsed, and in the anti-chamber there were other clients in waiting; and, watch in hand, the consultation was quickly resumed. When the time was expired, the parties rose, and the advocate accompanied his client to the door in the usual way; the attorney presented him with three sequins, which he took and returned into his closet.

The attorney thought the circumstance singular, and could not avoid communicating it to his

friends, who again mentioned it to others; and at last it reached the ears of the advocate, who in justification made this answer.

Count A * * * made me a present, for which I thanked him, and so we are quit; I gave him my consultation, for which he paid me, and so we are again quit; I laugh at fools, and go on in my usual way."

He was in the right to laugh at the world; for his books were always filled with the names of clients, and all his hours were taken up.

Nobody visited me but a few curious persons for the sake of sounding me, or litigants of a dangerous description. I listened patiently to them, and gave them my opinion; I did not keep my watch in my hand; I allowed them to stay as long as they chose; I accompanied them to the door, and they gave me nothing. This is the lot of all beginners, who must lay their account with waiting for three or four years before they can get a name, or gain any money.

I am inclined to think, however, that if I had continued my career at the bar, I should have got on much more promptly than many of my brethren; for in six months I pleaded a cause and gained it; but my star already threatened me with a new change, which I could not avoid. I reserve, however, for another place, the origin and consequences of a revolution much more violent still than that which I had experienced in the college of Pavia.

Meanwhile I passed my time alone in my closet, or with very indifferent company, and I made almanacks. To make almanacks either in Italian or French, is losing one's time with useless fancies; but at present, however, it was otherwise. I made a real almanack, which was printed, relished, and applauded.

I gave it for title, "The Experience of the past; Astrologer of the future; Critical Almanack for the year 1732." It contained a general discourse on the year, and four discourses on the four seasons in triplets, interwoven in the manner of Dante, containing criticisms on the manners of the age, and for every day of the year there was a prognostication containing a joke, a criticism, or a point.

I shall not give an account of a trifle which does not deserve the trouble. I shall merely transcribe the couplet for Easter-day, because this piece of pleasantry, in other respects perhaps the most common-place of the whole, produced a remarkable effect from the verification of the prognostication, and both procured me pleasure and services of great importance. The prediction in Italian verse ran as follows:

In si gran giorno una gentil contessa
Al perucchier sacrifica la messa.

In this great day an amiable countess will sacrifice the mass to her hair-dresser.

This little work, such as it was, amused me very much; for there were then no public amusements in Venice, and my different occupations prevented me from thinking of them. The criticisms and pleasantries of my almanack were really of a comic description, and each prognostication might have furnished subject-matter for a comedy.

I was then seized with a desire to return to my old project, and I sketched a few pieces; but on reflecting that comedy did not harmonize very much with the gravity of my gown, I concluded the majesty of tragedy to be more analagous to my profession, and I was guilty of a breach of fidelity to Thalia in ranking myself under the standard of Melpomene.

As I wish to conceal nothing from my reader, I must reveal my secret to him. My affairs became deranged—(I shall soon explain why and wherefore.) My closet brought me in nothing, and I was under the necessity of turning my time to some account. The profits of comedy are very moderate in Italy for the author; and from the opera alone I could hope to gain a hundred sequins at once.

With this view I composed a lyrical tragedy, called *Amalosonte*. I was well pleased with my labour, and I found people to whom the reading of it seemed to give satisfaction; but, to tell the truth, I had not made choice of connoisseurs. I shall afterwards speak of this musical tragedy. But I

must advert to a cause which my uncle Indric came to propose to me.

This cause was a contest originating in a hydraulical servitude. A miller made a purchase of a stream of water for his mill. The proprietor of the source altered its direction; and the object of the action was to reinstate the miller in his rights, with damages and interest. The town of Crema took the miller's part. A model had been executed; and legal investigations, violences and rebellions had taken place. The cause was of a mixed nature, partly civil and partly criminal; and it came before the *Avvogadori*, a very grave magistracy, like that of the Roman tribunes of the people. The advocate opposed to me was the celebrated Cordelina, the most learned and eloquent man at the bar of Venice; and I had to make an immediate answer without writing or time for meditation.

The day was appointed, and I repaired to the proper tribunal. My adversary spoke for an hour and a half; I listened to him without fear. On the conclusion of his harangue I began mine, in which I endeavoured, by a pathetic preamble, to conciliate the favour of my judge. This was my first exhibition, and I required indulgence. On entering upon the subject, I boldly attacked the harangue of Cordelina; my facts were true, my reasons good, my voice sonorous, and my eloquence not displeasing. I spoke for two hours, and on

my conclusion I retired bathed from head to foot.

My servant waited for me in an adjoining room. I changed my linen; I was fatigued and exhausted. My uncle made his appearance, who exclaimed, "My dear nephew, we have gained the action, and the adverse party is condemned in costs. Courage, my friend," continued he; "this first attempt makes you known as a man who will get on, and you will not be in want of clients." Who would not conclude me very fortunate?.....Heavens! what a destiny! What a number of vicissitudes and reverses.

The unfortunate event which I am about to recount, and which I have already announced, might have appeared among the anecdotes of the two preceding years; but I prefer giving the whole story at once, to interweaving it piece-meal with the rest of my narration.

My mother had been very intimate with Madam St. *** and Miss Mar***, two sisters living apart, though lodged under the same roof.

During her travels, the acquaintance dropped; but it was renewed on our settling again at Venice.

I was introduced to these ladies; and as Miss Mar*** was richest, she lodged on the first floor. As she saw company, she received the greatest number of visits.

Miss Mar*** was not young; but she still possessed the remains of beauty. At the age of forty

she was as fresh as a rose, as white as snow, with a natural complexion; large sparkling and intelligent eyes, a charming mouth, and an agreeable em-bon-point. Her nose alone disfigured her somewhat. It was aquiline, and a little too much raised, which, however, gave her an air of importance when she assumed a serious tone.

She had always refused marriage, though from her respectable air, and her fortune, she could never have been in want of advantageous offers; and for my good or bad fortune, it so happened that I was the happy mortal who made the first impression on her. We understood one another, but durst not speak; for she acted the prude, and I was afraid of a refusal. I consulted my mother, who was by no means displeased; and even, from an opinion that the match was advantageous for me, took upon her to open the matter. She proceeded very slowly however, not to draw me from my professional occupation, and she was desirous to see me first somewhat more firmly established.

Meanwhile I continued to pass my evenings with Miss Mar***. Her sister used to join the party, with her two daughters, who were marriageable. The oldest was deformed, and the other was ugly. She had, however, black and roguish eyes; an abundance of entertaining drollery, and possessed the most natural and engaging gracefulness. Her aunt disliked her, for she had frequently opposed her in her temporary inclinations, and never

failed to use her utmost efforts to supplant her in my good graces. For my part, I amused myself with the niece, and kept stedfast to the aunt.

In the mean time an excellency contrived to introduce himself to Miss Mar***, and paid her some attentions, of which she was the dupe. Neither of them had the least affection for the other; the lady wished the title, and his excellency the fortune.

However, seeing myself deprived of the place of honour which I had occupied, I was piqued, and, by way of revenge, paid my court to her detested rival. I carried my vengeance so far, that in two months time I became completely enamoured, and I drew up for my ugly mistress a good contract of marriage, regular and formal in every respect.

The mother of the young woman, and her adherents, it is true, made use of every means to get hold of me. In our contract there were articles very advantageous for me; I was to receive an income belonging to the young lady; her mother was to give up her diamonds to her; and I was to receive a considerable sum of money from a friend of the family, whom they would not name to me.

I still continued to visit Miss Mar***, and passed the evenings as usual; but the aunt distrusted the niece, for whom my attentions were, as she could perceive, somewhat less reserved. She knew that for some time I usually ascended to the

second floor before entering the first; she was devoured by vexation, and wished to get rid of her sister, her nieces, and myself.

For this purpose she solicited her marriage with the gentleman whom she supposed she had secured; and proposed to him to agree upon the time and conditions: but what was her astonishment and humiliation to receive for answer, that his excellency demanded the half of her property as a donation on marrying her, and the other half after her death! She was seized with transports of rage, hatred, and contempt; she sent a formal refusal to her suitor, and almost died of grief.

All this was communicated by persons about the house to the eldest sister, and it threw both mother and daughter into the greatest joy.

Miss Mar*** did not dare to speak; she was forced to stomach her chagrin; and seeing me display marks of kindness for the niece, she cast now and then a furious look at me with her large eyes, which were inflamed with rage. In this society we were all of us bad politicians.

Miss Mar***, who knew not the footing on which her niece received me, still flattered herself with the hope of tearing me from the object of her jealousy, and, on account of the difference of fortune, of again seeing me at her feet; but the perfidious part of which I am now going to accuse myself, soon completely undeceived her.

I composed a song for my mistress, which was

set to music by an amateur of taste, with the intention of having it sung in a serenade on the canal which the house of these ladies overlooked. I took an opportunity favourable for the execution of my project, fully sure of pleasing the one and provoking the other.

About nine o'clock in the evening, when we were assembled in a party in the saloon of the aunt, a very noisy symphony was heard on the canal under the balcony of the aunt, and consequently also under the windows of the niece. We all rose, that we might enjoy it; and on the conclusion of the overture, we heard the charming voice of Agnese, a female singer then in fashion for serenades, who, from the sweetness of her voice, and the purity of her expression, gave an effect to the music and a celebrity to the couplets.

The song was successful at Venice, and sung up and down every where; but it lighted up the torch of discord in the minds of the two rivals, each of whom appropriated it to herself. I tranquilised the niece by assuring her in a whisper, that the fête was intended for her, and I left the mind of the other in doubt and agitation. I received compliments from every one; which, however, I refused, and continued *incognito;* but I was by no means sorry to be suspected.

Next day I made my entrance at the usual hour. Miss Mar***, who was watching for me, saw me enter, came out to me in the passage, and made

me accompany her into her room. Having requested me to sit down beside her, she said to me, with a serious and passionate air—"You have regaled us with a very brilliant entertainment; but as there are more women than one in this house; for whom, pray, was this piece of gallantry intended? I know not whether I have a right to return you my thanks."—"Madam," I answered, "I am not the author of the serenade." Here she interrupted me with a proud and almost threatening air: "Do not conceal yourself," said she; "the effort is useless; tell me only whether this amusement was intended for me or for another? I must warn you," continued she, "that this declaration may become serious; that it ought to be decisive; and another word shall not be heard from me on the subject."

Had I been free, I know not what answer I should have made; but I was tied down, and had but one answer to give. "Madam," said I; "supposing me to be the author of the serenade, I should never have dared to address it to you."—"Why not?" said she. "Because," I answered, "your views are too elevated for me; and great lords alone can merit your esteem."....."This is enough," said she, rising: "I comprehend every thing sufficiently; very well, Sir, you will repent it."—(She was in the right: I have repented it very much.)

War was now declared. Miss Mar*** piqued at being supplanted by her niece, and afraid of see-

ing her married before herself, turned her views elsewhere. Opposite her windows there was a respectable family, not titled, but allied to patrician families; and the eldest son had paid his court to Miss Mar***, and met with a refusal. She endeavoured to renew the intercourse with the young man, who was not backward on his part; she purchased a very honourable situation for him, and in six days time every thing was agreed on, and the marriage concluded.

M. Z***, the new husband, had a sister who was to be married the same month to a gentleman of the main land; both marriages of persons in easy circumstances; and that of my mistress and myself was to be the third; and notwithstanding our poverty, we were also obliged to put on an appearance of wealth and ruin ourselves.

This was what deranged my affairs, and reduced me to extremities. But how was I to extricate myself?

My mother knew nothing of what was going on in a house which she seldom visited. Miss Mar***, availing herself of the ceremonies usual on such occasions, was malicious enough to inform her of it: she sent her a marriage card: my mother was greatly astonished: she spoke to me: I was obliged to own every thing; still, however, I endeavoured to soften the folly committed by me, in giving effect to promises of a nature not altogether to be relied on; and I concluded by telling her, that

at my age a wife of forty was not a suitable match for me. This last reason seemed to appease my mother more than all the rest. She asked me whether the time was yet fixed for my marriage? I told her that it was, and that we had still three good months before us.

A marriage at Venice in form, and with all the customary follies, is a much more ceremonious affair than any where else.

In the first place, there is the signature of the contract, with the intervention of parents and friends; a formality which we avoided by signing our contract secretly.

Secondly; The presentation of the ring. This is not the marriage-ring, but a stone ring, a solitary diamond, which the bridegroom must make a present of to his bride. The relations and friends are invited on this occasion: there is a great display in the house; great pomp and much dressing; and no meeting takes place at Venice without expensive refreshments. This expense we could not avoid; for our marriage, however ridiculous, could not be kept secret; and we were obliged to do like other people, and go completely through with things.

The third ceremony is the presentation of the pearls. A few days before the nuptial benediction takes place, the mother, or the nearest relation of the bridegroom, waits on the bride, and presents her with a necklace of fine pearls, which the young lady wears regularly about her neck from that day

to the termination of the first year of her marriage. Few families possess these pearl necklaces, or wish to be at the expense of them; but they are hired, and if they are any thing beautiful, the hire is very high. This presentation is attended with balls, entertainments, and dresses, and consequently is very expensive.

I shall say nothing of the other successive ceremonies, which are nearly similar to those which take place every where. I stop at that of the pearls, which I ought to have gone through, but which I omitted for a hundred reasons; the first of which was, that I had no more money.

On the approach of this last preliminary of the nuptials, I intimated to my intended mother-in-law, that I now expected the performance of the three conditions of our contract.

These were the revenues which were to be assigned over to me, the diamonds which the mother agreed to deposit in the hands of her daughter, or mine, before the day of the presentation of the pearls, and the putting me in possession of the whole or part of the considerable sum which was promised to her by the unknown protector.

The following is the result of the conference which one of my cousins took the charge of. The revenues of the young lady consisted in one of those life-annuities destined by the republic for a certain number of females; but they must all wait their turn; and there were still four to die before Miss

St. *** could enjoy hers; she herself might even die before touching the first quarter's payment.

As to the diamonds, they were decidedly destined for the daughter; but the mother, who was still young, would not consent to part with them during her own life-time, and would only agree to give them after her death.

With regard to the gentleman who was to give the money, (for what reason is not so clear) he had undertaken a journey, and was not to return for some time.

Such was the comfortable situation in which I was placed. I had not sufficient means to support an expensive establishment, and still less to enable me to vie with the luxury of two fortunate couples. My closet yielded me little or nothing; I had contracted debts: I saw myself on the brink of a precipice, and I was in love! I mused, I reflected, I sustained a distressing conflict between love and reason; but at last the latter gained the victory over the dominion of the senses.

I communicated my situation to my mother, who, with tears in her eyes, agreed with me, that some violent resolution was absolutely necessary, to avoid ruin. She mortgaged her property to pay my debts at Venice; I assigned over my Modena property for her maintenance, and I formed the resolution of departing.

In the moment when I had the most flattering prospects, after the successful appearance made by

me in court in the midst of the acclamations of the bar, I quitted my country, my relations, my friends, my love, my hopes, and my profession: I took my departure, and landed at Padua: the first step was taken, the rest cost me nothing; for thanks to the goodness of my temperament, excepting my mother, every thing else was soon forgotten by me; and the pleasure of liberty consoled me for the loss of my mistress.

On leaving Venice, I wrote a letter to the mother of the unfortunate young woman; and I attributed to her the immediate cause of the resolution to which I was reduced. I assured her that on the fulfilment of the three conditions of the contract, I should soon return; and expecting an answer, I still continued my journey.

I carried my treasure along with me. This was Amalasonte, which I had composed during my leisure, and respecting which I entertained hopes which I believed to be extremely well founded. I knew that the opera of Milan was one of the most considerable not only of Italy, but of all Europe. I proposed therefore to present my drama to the direction at Milan, which is in the hands of the nobility. I calculated on the reception of my work, and that I could not fail to obtain the hundred sequins; but he who reckons without his host, reckons twice.

CHAP. X.

My Journey from Padua to Milan—Stay at Vicenza and Verona—Road by the Lago di Garda to Salò—Unexpected Resource in that Town—Stay at Brescia—Agreeable Adventure at Bergamo—My Arrival at Milan—My first Visit to the Resident of Venice—Reading of my Amalasonte—Sacrifice of my Amalasonte—Unexpected Visit of the Resident—Resources still more unexpected for me—Arrival of an unknown Person at Milan—Opening of the Theatre through my Endeavours—Small Piece composed by me—Departure of the Resident for Venice.

In my way from Padua to Milan, I arrived at Vicenza, where I stopped for four days. In this city I was acquainted with Count Parminion Trissino, of the family of the celebrated author of Sophonisba, a tragedy composed in the Grecian manner, and one of the best pieces of the good age of Italian literature. I knew M. Trissino in early youth at Venice. We both of us had a taste for the dramatic art. I shewed him my Amalasonte, which he applauded very coldly, and he advised me to be constant to comedy, for which he knew me to possess talents. I was displeased to find he did not think my opera charming, and I attributed his coolness to the preference which he himself manifested for comedy.

I saw with pleasure at Vicenza the famous Olympic Theatre of Palladio, a very celebrated architect of the sixteenth century, and a native of that city; and I admired his triumphal arch, which with no other ornaments but those of the regularity of its proportions, passes for the chef-d'œuvre of modern architecture. The beautiful models exist, and the imitations are rare.

I passed from Vicenza to Verona, where I was desirous of becoming acquainted with the Marquis Maffei, the author of Merope, a very successful work, which has been happily imitated.

This man, who was versed in every department of literature, knew better than any person the necessity for the reform of the Italian theatre. He attempted the undertaking, and published a volume with the title of Reform of the Italian Theatre; which contained his Merope and two comedies, the Ceremonies and Rajouet. The tragedy met with general applause: but the two comedies were not so successful.

Not finding M. Maffei at Verona, I took the road to Brescia, and stopped for the night at Desenzano, on the Lago di Garda, and precisely in the same inn where a few years before I ran the risk of assassination. I asked the people of the inn, whether they remembered the adventure, they told me that they did, and that the villain, for the commission of other crimes, had been hanged.

Supping at the table-d'hôte, where, notwith-

standing my chagrin and my love, I ate with the best appetite in the world, I happened to be seated beside an abbé of the town of Salò, whose agreeable conversation prompted me to visit that charming country, where we proceed through orange trees in the open air, and always along the banks of a delightful lake.

Another reason determined me to turn aside from my road. I was very short of money. Fortunately, my mother was proprietor of a house at Salò, and being known to the tenant, I had reason to flatter myself that I should obtain something from him.

It was but four leagues from Desenzano to Salò, and the abbé and myself proposed this journey on horseback for the sake of enjoying the pleasure of the road. On the third day I returned alone, after a great deal of amusement, with a few sequins in my pocket, advanced me by my mother's tenant.

I paid the driver, who waited my return, his three days' repose, and resumed the Brescia road.

When at Vicenza, I wrote to M. Novello, whom I had known at Feltre in the quality of vicar of the government, and who was then assessor of the governor of Brescia.

I alighted at the government-palace—M. Novello received me very graciously, and recollecting some comic trifles composed by me at Feltre, he

asked me in the course of the evening at supper, whether I had any thing of the same kind to show him? I mentioned my opera, which he expressed a curiosity to hear. We fixed on the following day. He invited to dinner along with us several literary men, of whom there are many in that part of the country in deserved estimation, and after coffee I commenced my drama, which was listened to with attention, and unanimously applauded.

As my judges were connoisseurs, I had every reason to be satisfied. They even analysed my piece. The character of Amalasonte was well imagined and well sustained, and was a moral lesson for queen mothers charged with the guardianship and education of their august children.

The good and bad courtiers artfully contrasted formed an interesting picture, and the unfortunate catastrophe of Atalaric and the triumph of Amalasonte formed a denouement, which, while it satisfied the severe laws of tragedy, was productive of the entertainment and pleasure peculiar to the melo-drama.

My style appeared to this judicious assembly more adapted to tragedy than music, and they could have wished me to suppress the airs and the rhyme for the sake of converting it into a good tragedy.

I thanked them for their indulgence, but I was not in a situation to profit by their advice. In Italy, a tragedy with all the excellence of Corneille

or Racine, might have gained me high honour, but very little profit; and I was in want of both. I quitted Brescia with the determination of leaving my drama untouched, and of offering it to the opera of Milan.

There is a shorter way from Brescia to Milan, but I was desirous of seeing Bergamo, and I took the road by that city.

In traversing the country of Harlequin, I was curious to observe whether there was any existing trace of that comic character which afforded such entertainment to the Italian theatre. I could see neither the black visages, nor the small eyes, nor the ludicrous party-coloured dress, but I observed the hare tails in the hats with which the peasants of those districts are still equipped. I shall speak of the mask and of the character and origin of Harlequin in a chapter dedicated to the history of the four masks of Italian comedy.

On my arrival at Bergamo, I alighted at an inn in the suburbs, as carriages are unable to ascend to the town, which is very high and very steep. I went on foot to the government quarter, which is precisely the summit of this rough mountain.

Extremely fatigued, and cursing my idle curiosity, knowing nobody and requiring repose, I at last remembered that M. Porta, my old companion in the criminal-chancery of Chiozza, had been appointed civil-chancellor of Bergamo. I enquired for his residence, which I found out: my friend, how-

ever, was not at home, but six leagues distant, on a commission relative to his office. I requested his servant to allow me to rest myself a moment, and in the course of my conversation with him, I asked who was governor of the town.

What pleasing news! what an agreeable surprise for me! It was his Excellency Bonfadini, he who was podestà at Chiozza while I served there in quality of vice-chancellor. I found myself all at once quite at home, and I went immediately to the palace and announced myself.

While I was in the anti-chamber waiting for admission, I heard the governor himself laughing and exclaiming aloud, "Ah! the astrologer! It is the astrologer!—Show him in.—Ladies, you shall see the astrologer."

I could not conceive the meaning of all this; I was afraid lest an attempt should be made to hold me up to ridicule, and I entered under very considerable embarrassment. The governor soon quieted my apprehensions, and put me at my ease. He rose, and came forward to receive me, and introduced me to his lady and the society: "This is M. Goldoni; do not you recollect, ladies, the Countess C***, whom we used to rally on account of being perpetually at her toilette and never at mass, and the prognostication of the anonymous author? Well, this is M. Goldoni, the author of the Critical Almanack in question." On this, every one was anxious to show me some attention; the governor

invited me to his house and his table; an invitation which I accepted and profited by, for fifteen days passed by me in the most agreeable manner in the world. I was obliged, however, to make one with the ladies at play, and I was neither rich nor fortunate.

The governor, who was both respectful and considerate, abstained from enquiring into the motives of my journey. After a few days, however, I thought proper to communicate my adventures and my situation to him. He felt for me, and offered to keep me with him during the ten remaining months of his government; an offer for which I thanked him, but which I could not accept. I requested him, however, to give me letters of recommendation for Milan; and he gave me several, and, among others, I received one from his lady for the resident of Venice, which proved of great utility to me.

On the expiration of the fifteen days, I took my leave of his excellency. My air was by no means expressive of content. He questioned me closely on the subject: but I did not dare to say any thing; yet he could easily perceive that my embarrassment did not proceed from excessive wealth. He opened his purse; I refused; he insisted. I modestly took ten sequins, for which I wished to give him my note, but he refused to take it. What goodness and kindness! I took my departure next day, and continued my journey.

I arrived at length at Milan, the venerable capital of Lombardy, the antient appanage of the Spanish monarchy, where I should have appeared with the cloak and ruff according to the Castilian costume, had not the satiric muse deprived me of the place for which I was destined. I was now a candidate for the *cothurnus;* but the honours of a triumph were reserved for the *sock.*

I went to lodge at the Hôtel del Pozzo, one of the most famous in Milan; for if we wish to exhibit ourselves to advantage, we must at least appear rich, if we be not so in reality; and next day I carried the letter of recommendation of the governor's lady to the Resident of Venice.

M. Bartolini, Secretary of the Senate, and formerly Vice-bay at Constantinople, was then Resident. He was very rich, very magnificent, and in as high consideration at Milan as at Venice. Several years afterwards, he was named by scrutiny, Grand Chancellor of the Republic; a diguity which he continued to enjoy to the period of his death, which gives the title of Excellency to the person who holds it, and gives him a place immediately after the actual nobility.

The Resident of Venice being the only foreign minister resident at Milan, on account of the daily affairs which take place between the two neighbouring states, the Venetian envoy, enjoys the highest consideration, and is considered on an equal footing with the grandees of the Duchy of Milan.

This minister received me in the most frank and encouraging manner. He had a high esteem for the lady by whom I was recommended, and offered every assistance within his own power, or within the reach of his interest; but with a grave and ministerial air he enquired into the motives of my journey to Milan, and the nature of the adventures mentioned in the letter of Madam Bonfadini.

The question was natural and proper, and my answer was simple. I related to him, from beginning to end, the whole story of the aunt and the niece. The resident was acquainted with the persons, and laughed heartily at my recital; and with respect to the fear expressed by me, lest I should be pursued and molested, he assured me that I need be under no apprehension at Milan.

The naiveté of my conversation, and the detail of my adventures, led the minister to conclude I was by no means rich; and he asked me in a very noble manner, if I stood in need of any thing for my present supply? I thanked him; I had still some of my Bergamo sequins, and I had my opera, and wanted assistance from nobody. M. Bartolini invited me to dine with him next day; I accepted his invitation, and took my leave of him.

I was eager to present my piece, and to have it read. We were then in the very time of the Carnival. There was an opera at Milan, and I was acquainted with Caffariello, the principal actor,

and also with the director and composer of the ballets, and his wife *(Madam Grossatesta)*, who was the principal dancer.

I thought it would look becoming and be of advantage, for me to be presented to the directors of the Milan theatre, by known individuals. On a Friday, a day of relaxation throughout almost all Italy, I waited in the evening on Madam Grossatesta, who kept an open house, where the actors, actresses, and dancers of the opera usually assembled.

This excellent dancer, who was my country woman, and whom I knew at Venice, received me with the utmost politeness; and her husband, a clever and well-informed Modenese, had a dispute with his wife respecting my country, in which he very gallantly maintained that by descent mine was the same as his own.

It was still early, and as we were almost alone, I took advantage of that circumstance to announce my project to them. They were enchanted with it, and promised to introduce me, and they congratulated me beforehand on the reception of my work.

The company continued to increase; Caffariello made his appearance, saw and recognized me, saluted me with the tone of an Alexander, and took his place beside the mistress of the house. A few minutes afterwards, Count Prata, one of the directors of the theatre, the most skilled in every

thing relative to the drama, was announced. Madam Grossatesta introduced me to the Count, and spoke to him of my opera, and he undertook to propose me to the assembly of directors; but it would afford him infinite pleasure, he said, to know something of my work; a wish in which he was joined by my country woman. I wanted nothing so much as an opportunity of reading it. A small table and a candle were brought towards us, round which we all seated ourselves, and I began to read. I announced the title of Amalasonte. Caffariello sung the word Amalasonte; it was long, and seemed ridiculous to him. Every body laughed but myself: the lady scolded, and the nightingale was silent. I read over the names of the characters, of which there were nine in the piece. Here a small shrill voice, which proceeded from an old castrato who sung in the chorusses, and who mewed like a cat, cried out: "Too many, too many; there are at least two characters too many." I saw that I was by no means at my ease, and wished to give over my reading. M. Prata imposed silence on this insolent fellow, who had not the merit of Caffariello to excuse him, and, turning to me, observed: "It is true, sir, there are usually not more than six or seven characters in a drama; but when a work is deserving of it, we willingly put ourselves to the expense of two actors. Have the goodness," he added, "to continue the reading, if you please."

I resumed my reading: act first, scene first, Clodesile and Arpagon. Here M. Caffariello again asked me the name of the first soprano in my opera. "Sir," said I, "it is Clodesile." "What," said he, "you open the scene with the principal actor, and make him appear while every body enter, seat themselves, and make a noise. Truly, sir, I am not your man." (What patience!) M. Prata here interposed: "Let us see," said he, "Whether the scene is interesting?" I read the first scene, and while I was repeating my verses, a little insignificant wretch drew a paper from his pocket, and went to the harpsichord to recite an air in his part. The mistress of the house was obliged to make me excuses without intermission. M. Prata took me by the hand, and conducted me into a dressing-closet at a considerable distance from the room.

The Count having requested me to seat myself, sat down beside me and endeavoured to pacify me, respecting the misbehaviour of a set of giddy fools. He requested me to read my drama to himself alone, that he might be able to form a judgment of it, and to tell me his opinion with sincerity. I was very well pleased with this act of complaisance, for which I returned him my thanks, and I began the reading of my piece, which I went through from the first verse to the last, not sparing him a single comma. He listened with atttention, with patience; and on the conclusion of the reading, he

gave me the result of his attention and judgment nearly in the following words :

" It appears to me," said he, " that you have tolerably well studied the poetics of Aristotle and Horace, and that you have written your piece according to the principles of tragedy. You do not seem to be aware, that a musical drama is an imperfect work, subject to rules and customs destitute of common sense, I am willing to allow, but which still require to be literally followed. Were you in France, you might take more pains to please the public ; but here you must begin by pleasing the actors and actresses ; you must satisfy the musical composer ; you must consult the scene-painter ; every department has its rules, and it would be treason against the drama, to dare to infringe on them, or to fail in their observance.

" Listen," he continued ; " I shall point out to you a few of those rules which are immutable, and with which you do not seem to be acquainted.

" The three principal personages of the drama ought to sing five airs each ; two in the first act, two in the second, and one in the third. The second actress and the second soprano can only have three, and the inferior characters must be satisfied with a single air each, or two at the most. The author of the words must furnish the musician with the different shades which form the *chiaro-scuro* of music, and take care that two pathetic airs do not succeed one another. He must distri-

bute with the same precaution the bravura airs, the airs of action, the inferior airs, and the minuets and rondeaus.

"He must, above all things, avoid giving impassioned airs, bravura airs, or rondeaus, to inferior characters; those poor devils must be satisfied with what they get, and every opportunity of distinguishing themselves is denied them."

M. Prata would have gone on; but I interrupted him. "You have told me enough, sir," said I to him; "do not take the trouble of enlarging farther on the subject." I again returned him my thanks, and took my leave.

I perceived at last, that my judges at Brescia were in the right, and that Count Trissino of Vicenza was still more in the right, and that I alone was wrong.

On returning to my lodgings, I felt one moment hot and the next cold; I was quite crestfallen. I drew my piece from my pocket, and at sight of it, I felt half inclined to tear it to pieces. The waiter of the inn entered, and enquired what I wished for supper? "I shall not sup;" I answered, "but make me up a good fire." I still had my Amalasonte in my hands, I kept reading a few of the verses which I thought charming. "Accursed rules! My piece is good, I am certain of it; but the theatre is bad, and the actors, actresses, composers, decorators....may the devil take them all! and thou, unfortunate production,

which hast cost me so much labour, and deceived my hopes and expectations, I consign thee to the devouring flames!"....On this I threw it into the fire, and looked upon it while burning, with a sort of cool complacency. My chagrin and indignation required some vent; I turned my vengeance against myself, and then I deemed myself sufficiently revenged.

All was over, and the piece entirely out of my head; but on stirring up the ashes with the tongs, and collecting the remains of my manuscript to complete the work of destruction, I began to reflect that on no occasion had I sacrificed my supper to my chagrin. I called the waiter, and ordered him to cover the table instantly. I had not long to wait; I ate heartily, and drank still more so; I then went to bed, and enjoyed a profound sleep.

The only thing extraordinary was, that I awoke next morning two hours sooner than usual. Unpleasant remembrances now began to influence my mind:—"Come, come," said I to myself, "no ill-humour; pluck up courage, and call on the Resident of Venice." He had invited me to dinner; and, that I might have a private interview with him, it was requisite that I should visit him instantly. I accordingly dressed myself, and set out.

The minister seeing me at nine o'clock in the morning, suspected that something particular had urged my visit. He received me in his dressing-room. I gave him to understand that I wished to

speak to him privately, and he gave orders for his servants to leave us. I related to him what had happened the preceding day; I gave him a description of the disagreeable conversation which had so much shocked me; communicated the opinion of Count Prata to him; and I concluded with observing, that I was the most embarrassed man in the world.

M. Bartolini was much amused with the account of the comic scene of the three heroic actors, and asked me to allow him to read my opera.—"My opera, Sir? It is no longer in existence."—"What have you done with it?"—"I have burnt it."—"You have burnt it?"—"Yes, Sir, I have burned my whole stock, my sole property, all my resources and my hopes."

The minister laughed still more heartily at this, and after laughing and talking for some time, the result was, that I took up my residence with him; that he received me in the character of gentleman of his chamber, gave me a very pretty apartment; and, notwithstanding my disappointment, I found, taking every thing into consideration, that I was rather a gainer than a loser.

My employment was confined to agreeable commissions, such as complimenting noble Venetians on their travels, or waiting upon the governor or magistrates of Milan in the business of the republic. These occasions were by no means frequent, and I had all my leisure at my disposal, for

my amusement or otherwise as I might think proper.

There came to this town in the beginning of Lent, a mountebank of a singular description, whose name deserves a place perhaps in the annals of the age.

His name was Bonafede Vitali; he was a native of Parma, and he styled himself the Anonymous. He was of a good family, had received an excellent education, and had been a Jesuit. Disgusted with the cloister, he applied to the study of medicine, and succeeded in obtaining a professor's chair in the University of Palermo.

This singular man, to whom no branch of science was unknown, possessed an inordinate ambition to display the extent of his knowledge; and as he was a better orator than a writer, he quitted the honourable situation which he occupied, for the purpose of mounting the stage and haranguing the public; but as he was not rich enough to be satisfied with mere glory, he turned his talents to account by vending his medicines.

This was nothing more nor less than playing the mountebank; but his specific remedies were good, and his science and eloquence procured for him a reputation and a degree of consideration by no means common.

He resolved publicly all the most difficult questions which were proposed to him in every science and on the most abstruse subjects. Problems,

points of criticism, history, and literature, were handed up to him on his empirical stage, and he returned an immediate answer, and gave very satisfactory dissertations.

He appeared some years afterwards at Venice. He was sent for to Verona on account of an epidemical disease, which cut off all who were attacked by it. His arrival in that town resembled the appearance of Esculapius in Greece; he cured every body with a particular sort of apple (*Pommes d'Api*), and Cyprus wine. In gratitude for this, he was named first physician of Verona; but he did not enjoy that dignity long, having died the same year, regretted by every body, excepting the physicians.

When at Milan, the Anonymous had the satisfaction of seeing the place where he exhibited, always filled with crowds of people on foot and in carriages; but as the learned were far from being the best purchasers, he was obliged to furnish his scaffold with objects calculated to attract and entertain the ignorant multitude, and the new Hippocrates, therefore, vended his drugs and displayed his rhetoric, surrounded with the four masks of the Italian comedy.

M. Bonafede Vitali had also a passion for comedy, and kept up at his own expense a complete company of comedians, who, after assisting their master in receiving the money thrown up in handkerchiefs, and returning the same handkerchiefs filled with small pots or boxes, represented pieces

in three acts, with the help of torches of white wax, in a style which might be called magnificent.

I wished to become acquainted with the Anonymous, as much on account of the extraordinary man himself, as for the sake of his assistants. I called on him one day, under the pretext of purchasing his antidote. He interrogated me respecting the disease which I had, or which I believed myself to have; and he soon perceived that it was mere curiosity which brought me to his house. He gave orders to bring me a good cup of chocolate, which, he said, was the most suitable medicine for my disease.

I was delighted with this piece of politeness. We conversed together for some time, and I found him as amiable in private as he was learned in public. In the course of our conversation, I informed him, that I was attached to the Resident of Venice. It occurred to him, that I might be able to assist him in a certain project, which he communicated to me. I undertook to serve him, and I was fortunate enough to succeed. The affair was this:

But do not, my dear reader, let this digression disgust you, [for you will soon perceive how necessary it is for the connection of my story.

The theatres of Milan were closed during Lent, as is usual throughout Italy. The theatre for the representation of comedy was to have opened at Easter, and an engagement for that purpose had been entered into with one of the best theatrical

companies; but the director having received an invitation into Germany, set out without giving the slightest notice, and left the Milanese quite unprovided. The town being then without entertainments, proposed to send to Venice and Bologna to raise a company. The Anonymous was desirous that the preference should be given to his, which certainly was not excellent, but which, nevertheless, contained three or four individuals of merit, and which, on the whole, was very well arranged. In fact, M. Casali, who acted the principal lovers, and M. Rubini, who was an admirable pantaloon, were both called the following year to Venice, the first for the theatre of St. Samuel, and the other for that of St. Luke.

I willingly accepted of a commission, which promised every way to be agreeable to me. I imparted it to the minister, who undertook to speak to the principal ladies of the city. I myself mentioned the business to Count Prata, whose acquaintance I continued to cultivate; I employed my own credit, and that of the Resident of Venice, with the governor: and in three days time the contract was signed and the Anonymous satisfied; and I had, by way of recompense, a second box in front, large enough to contain ten persons.

Availing myself of this company, with which I was on an intimate footing, I resumed the composition of some theatrical trifles. I should not have had sufficient time for a comedy, as the ar-

rangement with the Anonymous was merely for the spring and summer, to the month of September; and as there was a musical composer, and a male and female who sung pretty well in the company, I composed an interlude for two voices, under the title of the Venetian Gondoleer; which was executed with all the success that such a species of composition ought to have. This is the first comic production of mine which appeared in public and afterwards in print; for it was published in the fourth volume of the Venetian edition of my comic operas by Pasquali.

Whilst they were acting my Venetian Gondoleer at Milan, together with sketches or outlines of comedies, the first representation of Belisarius was given out, and it was continually announced during six days to excite the public curiosity and secure a full house. In this the comedians were not deceived. The theatre of Milan at that time, afterwards burnt down, the almost universal destiny of theatres, was the largest in Italy next to that of Naples; and on the first representation of Belisarius, the crowd was so great, that the passages even were choked up.

But what a detestable piece! Justinian was imbecile, Theodore a courtezan, and Belisarius a long-winded divine. He appeared on the stage deprived of his eyes; Harlequin was his guide and drove him along with a cudgel. Every body was shocked, and no one more so than myself, having

distributed a number of tickets to persons of the first merit.

Next day I called on Casali, who fell a laughing when he saw me, and said in a bantering tone: "Very well, sir; what do you think of our famous Belisarius?" "I think," said I, "that it is such a piece of indignity to the public as I could hardly have expected."—"Alas, sir," he replied, "you know but little of actors. There is not a company which does not occasionally fall upon similar tricks to gain money: and this in the theatrical jargon is called *una arrostita:*" (roasting) "What do you mean by arrostita," said I. "It means," he answered, "in good Tuscan, *una corbellatura;* in the Lombard dialect *una minchionada;* and in French *une attrape,* (a trick.) The actors are in the habit of availing themselves of it, and the public is accustomed to suffer it; all are not equally delicate, and the arrostitas will be continued till they are suppressed by a reform."—"I entreat of you, M. Casali," said I, "not to *roast* me a second time; and I advise you to burn your Belisarius, for there never was any thing, I believe, more destestable."

"You are in the right," said he; "but I am persuaded that a good piece might be made of this bad one."—"Undoubtedly," I observed: "for the history of Belisarius may furnish the subject of an excellent piece."—"Well, sir," replied Casali, "as you are desirous of labouring for the theatre, you cannot do better than begin with this."—"No,"

said I, "I will begin with a tragedy."—"Make a tragi-comedy of it."—"Not in the taste of yours."—"Let there be no masks nor buffoonery."—"I shall see what I can do."—"Stop a moment—here is Belisarius."—"I don't want it; I shall take history for my guide."—"So much the better—I recommend my friend Justinian to you."—"I shall do the best I can."—"I am not rich, but I shall endeavour ....." "Nonsense."—"I write for my amusement."—"I must impart a secret to you, sir.—I am going next year to Venice, and if I could only carry a Belisarius along with me ..... a magnificent Belisarius *(in fiochi.)*—"You shall have it perhaps."—"But you must promise me."—"Well, I do promise."—"On your honour?"—"On my honour."

With this, Casali was satisfied; and I quitted him, and returned home, determined to keep my word with him carefully and religiously.

The resident knowing that I was returned, sent for me for the purpose of informing me that he was on the point of setting out for Venice on particular business, having received permission from the Senate to absent himself from Milan for some days.

He had a Milanese secretary; but they were not on good terms with one another. The secretary was somewhat too fastidious, and the minister was subject to very violent sallies of passion. He honoured me with several commissions, and as

there was reason to apprehend from the rumours which were in circulation that Lombardy was on the point of being implicated in a war, he charged me, among other things, to write to him every day, and to be an attentive observer of every thing which should take place. This was encroaching on the duties of the secretary; but I could not refuse, and it would have been in vain to argue the point with the minister.

I did not fail to execute the commissions entrusted to me; but I endeavoured, at the same time, to undertake the work which I promised to execute on my word of honour.

In a few days I completed the first act. I communicated it to M. Casali, who was enchanted with it, and wished to copy it instantly; but two events took place at the same time, the first of which retarded my progress in the work, and the other prevented me from working for a long time.

CHAP. XI.

Meeting with a fair Venetian—Milan surprised by the Troops of the King of Sardinia—My Embarrassment on account of the War, and the fair Venetian—Return of the Venetian Resident to Milan—His Departure with me for Crema—Surrender of the Castle of Milan—Siege of Pizzighetone—Armistice—Surrender of the Place—My theatrical Occupations resumed—Unfortunate Visit—My Rupture with the Resident—My Arrival at Parma—Terrible Alarm of the Parmesans—The Battle of Parma of 1737—Death of the German General—View of the Camp after the Battle—Change of Route—A very troublesome Event for me.

WALKING one day towards Porta Rosa with M. Carrara, a gentleman from Bergamo, and an intimate friend of mine, we stopped at the famous inn *de la Cazzola*, (Kitchen Lamp), pronounced Cazzeura by the Milanese, for the Lombards have the dipthong *eu* like the French, and pronounce it in the same manner.

No rural party, or party of any other description whatever, is ever brought together at Milan without eating. At theatres, at gaming-houses, at meetings in families either of ceremony or compliment, at courses, at processions, and even at spiritual conferences, they always eat. Hence the Flo-

rentines, who are generally sober and economical, call the Milanese the wolves of Lombardy.

M. Carrara and myself ordered a slight repast, composed of *polpettino* (little balls of minced meat) small birds, and craw-fish; and while our collation was making ready, we took a walk in the garden.

On our returning, we passed by the kitchen of the inn, and I observed at a window of the first floor a very pretty face which affected concealment behind the curtain. I immediately set on foot an enquiry. The landlord knew nothing of the person. She arrived three days before in a post-chaise, with a gentleman of respectable appearance, who absented himself the next day, and never appeared since. She seemed in affliction, and was supposed to be a Venetian.

Young, beautiful, a Venetian, and in affliction! "Come," said I to my companion; "we must endeavour to console her." On this I began to ascend, and Carrara followed me. I knocked; but the lady would not open. I spoke Venetian, and announced myself as a person attached to the resident of Venice: on which she threw the door open, and burst into tears on receiving me, and seemed plunged in the utmost distress.

What a striking and interesting spectacle! A beautiful woman in tears has a claim on every feeling heart; I shared her distress, and did what I could to quiet her, while my friend Carrara continued all the time laughing. What a barbarous

man! How could he think of laughing? I was soft as wax, and every moment became more and more affected.

I at length succeeded in drying up the tears of my charming country-woman, and prevailed with her to speak. She was, according to her account, of a very good family in Venice. Having fallen in love with a man of a condition above her own, she had flattered herself with the idea of marrying him, but they had met with nothing but opposition from every quarter, and they were under the necessity of leaving their country.

The lady had made a confident of a maternal uncle, who was very fond of her, and weak enough to second her attempts. They set out all three together, and took the Milan road, passing through Crema. They were pursued and overtaken in that town, and the uncle was arrested and thrown into prison. The two lovers were fortunate enough to effect their escape. They arrived at Milan by night; and took lodgings at the inn where we now were. The lover went out early next morning, and never returned. For three days the lady had remained alone, despairing of again seeing her ravisher—her unworthy seducer; and the gushing tears of this languishing beauty completed the story, and quite overpowered my sensibility.

Carrara, who was no longer merrily inclined, but, on the contrary, displeased at being detained from his repast by the length of this recital, began

to dwell in very pathetic terms on the unruliness of his appetite. My feelings would not allow me to leave my countrywoman, without entering on some arrangement with her. I therefore requested her to allow us to have our collation brought into her room, that the cravings of the gormand might be satisfied. She very readily consented, and our repast was brought in.

At table, I continued the conversation with the lady, while Carrara ate and laughed at me.

The sun began to disappear, and it became necessary for us to separate; but on taking leave of my fair country-woman, I promised to see her again next day; and when I wished her good evening (which I did in a very tender manner), I requested her to tell me her name. She seemed to hesitate at this; but at length she whispered in my ear, that her name was Margarita Biondi. I afterwards learned, that her name was neither Margarita nor Biondi; and that she was neither a niece nor a lady; but she was young, pretty, and amiable, and her air and appearance were decent and respectable. I was quite sincere. How then could I abandon her in her distressed and afflicted situation?

In returning to town, I was rallied and laughed at by Carrara, for my simplicity and credulity; but this did not prevent me from keeping my word with the fair stranger, for whom I hired very pretty furnished apartments, in a good air on the Parade. I dined with her the following day, and conducted

her in a coach to her new lodgings. She requested me to use my interest to procure the liberation of her uncle from prison, to speak to the Resident on the subject on his return to Milan, and to prevail on him to bring about a reconciliation between her and her relations. I could refuse her nothing; I visited her frequently, and her company appeared to me every day in a more interesting light.

I was very well satisfied with my situation, and this last adventure rendered it still more pleasing; but it was decreed that I should never remain long in the enjoyment of any happiness whatever. Pleasures and chagrins followed one another in rapid succession with me; and the day in which my enjoyment was at its height, was always sure to be the forerunner of some disagreeable event.

Early one morning my servant burst into my room, and drew aside the curtains. On seeing me awake, he exclaimed: "Ah, Sir! I have great news to tell you: fifteen thousand Savoyards, horse and foot, have taken possession of the city, and are drawn up in the Square of the Cathedral."

Astonished at this piece of unexpected news, I put a hundred questions to my laquey, who knew nothing more than what he had already told me. I dressed myself with all possible expedition and repaired to the coffee-house, where ten people endeavoured to speak at once to me. All were anxious to be the first to inform me: and I had many dif-

ferent accounts, but the following is actually what took place:

We were in the commencenent of the war of 1733, called the war of Don Carlos. The King of Sardinia having declared himself for that prince, had united his forces with those of France and Spain against the house of Austria. The Savoyards, having marched all night, arrived by break of day at the gates of Milan. The general demanded the keys of the town, and Milan being too large for a defence, the keys were accordingly delivered over to him.

Without enquiring farther into the matter, I deemed myself sufficiently instructed to communicate the event to the Resident. I returned, and wrote an account of it, which I sent off express to Venice, and three days afterwards the Venetian minister returned to Milan.

In the mean time, the French troops soon made their appearance, and joined their allies the Sardinians, and they formed together that large army which was called by the Italians *l'armata dei Gallo-Sardi.*

The allies prepared for laying siege to the castle of Milan, and they made approaches for the purpose of battering the citadel, which obliged the inhabitants of the Parade to shift their quarters. My poor Venetian protegée, who was of the number, gave me notice of her embarrassment. I lost no

time in removing her; and being unwilling to place her in a hotel, I confided her to the care of a Genoese merchant, in whose house I could only see her in the midst of a numerous and excessively punctilious family.

The besieging army soon began to open their trenches, and to construct their covered ways; the siege proceeded rapidly; the batteries kept firing night and day, and the guns of the citadel answered those of the besiegers. The bombs now and then improperly directed, paid us a visit in the town.

A few days afterwards, my minister received a ducal letter in parchment, and sealed with lead, from a courier of the republic of Venice, directing him to leave Milan and take up his residence at Crema during the war.

This information the Resident immediately communicated to me. He took this opportunity to get rid of his secretary, whom he disliked, and he conferred this honourable and lucrative situation on me, and ordered me to hold myself in readiness to set out next day. As we required a correspondent in Milan during our absence, I proposed my friend Carrara, whom the minister approved of, and he took up his residence at our hotel accordingly.

I soon packed up my necessaries, and arranged my papers; and I then proceeded to take my leave of my fair Venetian, who wept and seemed quite inconsolable at the news. She recommended strongly to me her uncle, who happened to be in

the prison of Crema. I endeavoured to console her, and gave some money to herself as well as to her landlord, which seemed to contribute to the restoration of her tranquillity. We embraced each other; and I returned home. At break of day, I took my departure with the minister.

On arriving at Crema, my first care was to visit the jail, and to enquire for M. Leopold Scacciati, the uncle in question. He was no longer there, having been set at liberty in consequence of my recommendation. He had left the place the day before my arrival, with the intention of proceeding to Milan.

How was this man, who knew nothing of my departure from Milan, to find out Miss Biondi in so large and populous a town? This reflection occasioned me a good deal of uneasiness, and I wrote to the Genoese merchant and to M. Carrara, from the latter of whom I received an answer in nearly the following terms:

"Your Leopold Scacciati arrived at Milan, and made his appearance at the hotel, where he supposed he should find you. The porter shewed him up, and he claimed his niece from me. I conducted him to the house of the Genoese; and, in my opinion, I rendered a piece of essential service to you in delivering over to him a girl who was burthensome to you, and who was by no means deserving of your care."

At a distance from this enchanting object, I

owned that my friend had conducted himself with great propriety; and as I heard nothing farther either of the lady or her uncle, I was affected by their ingratitude in a very slight degree. I soon forgot both of them, and applied seriously to discharge the duties of my situation.

Crema is a town belonging to the republic of Venice, and is governed by a noble Venetian with the title of Podestà. It lies forty-eight leagues from the capital, and nine from the city of Milan.

The Resident of Venice was enabled in this town to have an eye over every thing that was taking place, and to watch the designs of the belligerent powers, without committing the republic, which was neuter, and which could not acknowledge the new masters of the Milanese.

But this minister was not the only person similarly employed; for a senator had been dispatched from Venice to Crema, at the same time, with the title of Extaordinary Proveditor; and both exerted themselves to the utmost of their power in keeping up correspondences and transmitting the most recent and certain information to the Senate.

We received every day, at least ten, twelve, and even sometimes so many as twenty letters from Milan, Turin, Brescia, and every part of the country, through which troops were to pass, or where forage or stores were demanded. It was my business to open them, compare them, make extracts from them, and then to project a dispatch

agreeably to the most uniform and most satisfactory accounts.

The minister, guided by my labours, made his selections accordingly, and afterwards proceeded to make his remarks and reflections, and we sometimes dispatched four messengers in the course of one day to the capital.

This exercise gave me, no doubt, a great deal of employment, but I was infinitely amused by it. I became in this manner initiated into the knowledge of politics and diplomacy, from which I derived very great advantage when I was named, four years afterwards, Genoese Consul at Venice.

After a siege of twenty days, during four of which there was a practicable breach, the castle of Milan was under the necessity of capitulating, having demanded and obtained all the honours of war, drums beating, colours flying, and covered waggons to Mantua, which was the general rendezvous of the Germans, who were not yet sufficiently strong to oppose the progress of their enemies.

The combined armies profiting by this favourable conjuncture, laid siege a few days afterwards to Pizzighetone, a small frontier town in the Cremonese, at the confluence of the Serio and Ada, very well fortified, and possessing a very considerable citadel.

The theatre of war advancing nearer and nearer to Crema, we were the better enabled to procure news, as we could distinctly hear the discharge of

the guns; but hostilities did not proceed much farther, for the Germans, who were in expectation of orders from Vienna or Mantua, demanded an armistice of three days, which was readily granted to them.

On this occasion I was sent, in the quality of an honourable spy, to the camp of the allies. It is impossible to draw with accuracy such a picture as a camp presents during an armistice; the most brilliant festivity prevails, and altogether it exhibits the most astonishing spectacle which it is possible to imagine.

A bridge thrown over the breach afforded a communication between the besiegers and the besieged: tables were spread in every quarter, and the officers entertained one another by turns: within and without, under tents and arbours, there was nothing but balls, entertainments, and concerts. All the people of the environs flocked there on foot, on horseback, and in carriages: provisions arrived from every quarter; abundance was seen in a moment, and there was no want of stage doctors and tumblers. It was a charming fair, a delightful rendezvous.

I enjoyed it for several hours every day; and on the third I saw the German garrison march out with the same honours as those which had been granted to the castle of Milan. I was amused to see French and Piedmontese soldiers leaving their standards, and thrusting themselves in the midst

of the ranks of their countrymen, and thus desert with impunity.

In the evening I made a report of all that I saw or learned to the minister; and I ventured to assure him, in consequence of the conversations which I had had with different officers, that the combined armies were to encamp in the duchies of Parma and Piacenza, for the purpose of securing them from the incursions which there was every reason to apprehend from the Germans.

The event corresponded with the information; the allies gradually defiled towards the Cremonese, and established themselves in the environs of Parma, where the Duchess Dowager at the head of the regency governed the state.

The distance of the troops diminished my labour very much, and afforded me leisure to apply to more agreeable occupations. I resumed my Belisarius, on which I employed myself with great assiduity and interest, and I never quitted it till it was finished, and till I thought I had every reason to be satisfied.

In the mean time, my brother, who, on the death of M. Visnoni, had quitted the service of Venice and repaired to Modena, in the hopes of being employed by the Duke, having been disappointed in this expectation, came to join me at Crema. I received him in a very friendly manner, and presented him to the Resident, from whom he received the place of gentleman, formerly occupied

by myself. But if the one was hot and impatient, the other was fiery in the extreme; and they could not agree together. The Resident gave my brother his dismissal and he took his leave in very bad humour.

The ill conduct of my brother did me some injury in the mind of the minister, who never afterwards had the same kindness or friendship for me. A hypocritical dominican contrived to worm himself into his confidence, and when I was not in the way he wrote to his dictation. All this had a tendency to disgust me. My superior and myself were now two beings discontented with one another, and the following adventure had the effect of producing a total rupture.

One day when I was in my chamber, a stranger desirous of speaking to me was announced. I desired him to be shewn in, and a little lean lame man, very indifferently dressed, and of a very doubtful physiognomy, made his appearance.—"Sir," said he, "I am your most obedient servant, Leopold Scacciati:—"Ah! M. Scacciati?"—"Yes, sir, the person whom you were so good as to protect and liberate from prison."—"From what place have you now come?"—"From Milan, sir."—"And how is your niece?"—"Very well, admirable, you shall see her."—"See her! where is she?"—"Here."—"She is here?"—"Yes, sir, at the Stag Inn, where she expects you to dine with her."—"Gently, M. Scacciati, what have you been about

so long at Milan?"—"I was acquainted with a number of officers who did me the honour to call on me."—"To call on you?"—"Yes, sir."—"And your niece?"—"She did the honours of the table."—"Only the table?".....

Here a servant interrupted a conversation, which I could have wished to push somewhat farther, with the information, that I was wanted by the minister. I requested M. Scacciati to wait my return, and I made my appearance before the Resident, who gave me a manuscript to copy. It was the manifesto of the King of Sardinia, with the reasons which induced him to engage in the French cause. This production was at that moment of some value, for the original was still in the press at Turin, and it required to be copied that it might be sent off to Venice.

The minister did not dine nor sup at home that day. He ordered me to bring him the manuscript and copy next morning when he awoke. The paper was pretty voluminous, and badly written, but it required dispatch. I returned to my room, and informed M. Scacciati that I could not dine in town that day, and that I should visit his niece in the evening as soon as I possibly could. He told me that she was to set out instantly. I repeated my declaration with an expression of impatience, and the lame gentleman thought proper to turn on on his heel and leave me.

I sat down instantly to the work, and laboured

at it till nine o'clock in the evening, taking no other dinner than a cup of chocolate. On finishing, I locked the two copies in my desk, and repaired to the Stag Inn, where I found the fair Venetian engaged in a pharo party with four gentlemen, none of whom were known to me. The game was concluded as I entered. They all rose and shewed me the utmost attention. Supper was immediately served up, and I was honoured with a seat beside the lady. I was dreadfully hungry, and ate at a great rate.

After supper, play was resumed. I punted and gained, and I durst not therefore go away first. We passed the whole night at play. When I looked at my watch, I found it was seven o'clock in the morning. I was still a gainer, but I could not remain any longer: and I therefore made my excuses to the company, and took my leave of them.

I met one of our servants a few steps from the inn, by whom I was informed that I had been sought for by order of the Resident in every corner. He rose at five o'clock in the morning, and asked for me; and on being told that I had slept out all night, he became quite furious.

I made all the haste I could home, and entered my chamber, from which I took the two papers, and delivered them to the minister. He gave me a very unpleasant reception, and even went so far as to suspect me of having communicated the King of Sar-

dinia's manifesto to the extraordinary proveditor of the republic of Venice.

This imputation hurt and distressed me very much, and, contrary to my usual mode of behaviour, I gave way to an impulse of passion. The minister threatened to have me arrested. I quitted him, and sought a refuge with the bishop of the town, who took my part, and undertook to make up matters with the Resident. I thanked him for his kind intention; but my resolution was taken to depart as soon as my innocence should be established.

The Resident had time to make enquiry where I had passed the night, and his opinion of me underwent a change; but I was unwilling to expose myself any more to similar unpleasant scenes, and I asked permission to give up my situation, which was accordingly granted. I called on the minister for the purpose of excusing myself, and returning him my thanks. I then packed up the different articles belonging to me, hired a chaise for Modena, where my mother still remained, and set out three days afterwards.

On arriving at Parma, the 28th of June, St. Peter's Eve, in 1733, a memorable day for that town, I went to lodge at the *Osteria del Gallo*.

I was awaked next morning by a dreadful noise. On springing out of bed, and opening my room window, I perceived the place full of people running in all directions, and rushing against one ano-

ther. There was nothing but weeping, crying, and distress: I observed women carrying their children in their arms, and others dragging them along the ground; men loaded with hampers, baskets, trunks, and packages; old men unable to support themselves; sick persons in their shirts; carts upturned and the horses running about loose. "What is the meaning of all this," said I; "is it the end of the world?"

I wrapped myself in my great-coat over my shirt, rushed hastily down stairs to the kitchen; but to all my demands and questions I could receive no answer. The innkeeper was packing up his plate, and his wife, with her hair all dishevelled, held a box of jewels in her hand, and her clothes in her apron. I wished to speak to her, but she threw me against the door and rushed out. "What is the matter? what is the matter?" I asked of every person I met. At length I perceived a man at the stable door, whom I recognized to be my driver. I went up to him, and he was able to satisfy my curiosity.

"The whole place is in uproar," said he, "and not without reason; for the Germans are at the gates of the town, and if they enter it, it is sure to be pillaged. Every one is taking refuge in the church, and confiding their effects to the protection of God." "Will the soldiers," said I to him, "have time for reflection on such an occasion? Besides, are all the Germans Catholics?"

While I was thus conversing with my guide, the scene immediately changed, and nothing but cries of joy, ringing of bells, and discharging of all manner of fire-works, was to be heard. The churches were immediately empty, the property was carried back again, friends were inquiring kindly for one another, and embracing in an affectionate manner. How was this change brought about? The affair was this:

A spy in the pay of both the Allies and the Germans appeared the night before in the camp of the former, at the village of St. Peter, a league's distance from the city, and gave information that a detachment of the German troops were to forage the following day in the environs of Parma with the intention of surprising the town.

The Marshal de Coigny, who then commanded the army, detached the two regiments of Picardy and Champagne to watch the enemy; but as this brave general never failed in precaution or vigilance, he caused the spy whom he distrusted to be arrested, and gave orders that the whole camp should remain under arms.

M. de Coigny was not mistaken: on the two regiments arriving within sight of the ramparts of the town they discovered the German army to the number of forty thousand, under Marshal de Mercy, with ten field pieces.

The French, who were advancing on the high-way, surrounded with large ditches, had no means

of retreat; they advanced boldly; but they were nearly all cut down by the enemy's artillery.

This was the signal of surprise for the French commander. The spy was instantly hanged, and the army began its march with the utmost expedition. The road was confined and the cavalry could not advance; but the infantry made such a vigorous charge that the enemy were forced to retreat, and it was then that the alarm of the Parmesans was converted into joy.

Every body ran to the ramparts of the town, and I ran with the rest. It was impossible to have a nearer view of a battle; the smoke frequently prevented us from distinguishing objects; but still we had a very rare coup-d'œuil, such as few people can boast of having enjoyed.

A continual fire was kept up for nine hours without interruption, and night separated the two armies. The Germans dispersed themselves among the mountains of Regio, and the allies remained masters of the field of battle.

Next day I saw Marshal de Mercy, who was killed in the heat of the battle, brought into Parma on a litter. This general was embalmed and sent to Germany, as was also the Prince of Wirtemberg, who shared the same fate.

But a much more horrible and disgusting spectacle was seen by me in the afternoon of the following day. This was the dead bodies which had been stript during the night, and which were said to

money and effects, and in having saved Belisarius from the wreck.

Having lost sight of the robbers, and not knowing what was become of my travelling companion, I discovered an avenue of trees, and I lay down tranquilly beside a stream. I allayed my thirst with the water which I lifted to my mouth in the hollow of my hand, and the water tasted delicious.

Feeling myself exhausted with fatigue, and my mind having become more calm, and not seeing any person to whom I could apply, I took by chance one of the directions of the avenue, which I was persuaded would terminate in some inhabited place. I soon perceived labourers at work in the field. I accosted them with confidence, and communicated my adventure to them, of which they knew something already, having seen the knaves who stript us, proceed along a cross road laden like mules. They were deserters, who attacked passengers, and did not even spare the hamlets and farm-houses. Such are the unfortunate fruits of war, which fall indiscriminately on friends and foes, and distress the innocent. "How," said I, "can these robbers get rid of the effects stolen by them in this manner, without being apprehended?" The peasants were all anxious to answer me, and their eagerness marked their indignation. At a short distance from the place where we then were,

there was a company of rich individuals established and tolerated for the purpose of purchasing the spoils of the victims of war; and the purchasers paid no attention whether the effects came from the field of battle or the highway.

The sun was setting. These good people offered me a small fragment of their repast, which, notwithstanding my disaster, I ate with considerable appetite. They invited me to pass the night with them, and I was disposed to accept with gratitude the hospitality of those kind individuals, when a respectable old man, the father and grandfather of my benefactors, remarked to me, that with them I could only repose on straw and hay, and that it would be better to allow them to conduct me to Casal Pasturlengò, which was only a league distant, and where the parish priest, a very worthy and polite man, would receive and lodge me with the utmost pleasure.

This opinion met with general applause. A young man undertook to conduct me. I followed him, proffering thanks to heaven, which, while it tolerates the wicked, excites also kind and virtuous hearts to relieve their fellow-creatures.

CHAP. XII.

Hospitality of the Clergyman of Pasturlengò—Reading of my Belisarius to him—My Arrival at Brescia—Unexpected Meeting in that Town—Disagreeable but necessary Resource—Journey to Verona—Verona—Its Amphitheatre, a Roman Work—Comedy during the Day contrary to the Italian Custom—Fortunate Adventure—Reading and Reception of my Belisarius—My first Connection with the Comedians—Introduction of Interludes in the Theatre—The Comic Opera unknown in Lombardy and the Venetian Dominions—The Fair Ward, an Interlude—Present of Casali well employed—My Arrival at Venice—View of that City by Night—My Presentation to the noble Grimani—His Promises and my Hopes.

On arriving at Casal Pasturlengò, I desired my guide to inform the clergyman of my accident. A few minutes afterwards, this worthy pastor came to the door, offered me his hand, and requested me to walk in. Enchanted with this favorable reception, I turned towards the young man by whom I had been escorted, and in thanking him, I testified my regret at my inability to recompense him. The clergyman perceived my embarrassment, and gave a few pence to the peasant, who went away quite satisfied. This is a trifle, it is true; but it proves the way of thinking of a just and compassionate man.

The supper is taken at an early hour in the country. That of the clergyman was ready when I arrived, and I made no ceremony, but gladly shared with him what had been prepared by his gouvernante.

Our conversation turned at first on the war, and I mentioned what I had seen at Parma, Milan, and Pizzighetone. Insensibly I found myself engaged in some details respecting my employment and occupations; and my discourse ended as usual with the article of Belisarius.

The ecclesiastic, who was a very wise and exemplary man, did not condemn decent and moral plays, and he expressed a curiosity to hear my piece; but I was then too fatigued to begin the reading, and it was put off till next day. I was shewn to a delightful bed, where I forgot all my chagrins, and slept till ten o'clock the next morning.

As soon as I was awake, an excellent cup of chocolate was brought me. As the weather was fine I walked out till mid-day, the hour of dinner, when we saw one another again with pleasure. Two other Abbés of his parish dined with us, and after dinner I began the reading of my piece. My host demanded my permission to admit his gouvernante and his *regisseur*. For my part, I could have wished the whole village present.

The piece was very much relished. The three Abbés, who were by no means blockheads, distin-

guished the most interesting and remarkable passages; and the villagers proved by their applause, that my work was suited to every capacity, and equally capable of pleasing the learned and the ignorant.

I received the compliments of my host, who thanked me for my complaisance; the two other Abbés followed his example, and each of them gave me an invitation to dinner; but I was unwilling to occasion any inconvenience to my landlord, and I was, besides, anxious to continue my route. The clergyman asked me, in what manner I intended to travel? I told him I was very well disposed to set out on foot; but this worthy man would not hear of such a thing. He gave me his horse and his servant, and he gave the servant orders to pay for my dinner. I took my leave next day, overcome with the favours and acts of kindness I had received.

On arriving at Brescia, I was more embarrassed than ever. I had no other resource but that of calling on the Governor, with whom I was unacquainted; but how could I expect to find in a town that cordiality which I had met with in a village?

One source of vexation was my inability to recompense the servant of the clergyman. I requested him to wait for me at a small inn, where we alighted, and I proceeded towards the government-palace. In turning the corner of a street

which had been pointed out to me, I observed a man coming limping towards me. It was M. Leopold Scacciati, the uncle of my fair countrywoman.

Equally astonished at seeing me as I was to behold him, he complained to me of not having seen me again at the Stag Inn at Crema. I recounted to him my precipitate departure from that town; I gave him a recital of the disastrous events which I had experienced; and I painted the dismal situation I was then reduced to. This man, such as he was, seemed affected even to tears, and he requested me to accompany him home.

I was in want of every thing; but knowing nothing of what Scacciati and his niece were doing at Brescia, I refused to go. The lame fellow, who was shorter than myself, sprung to my neck, begged, entreated, and embraced me, and spoke of his obligations, his gratitude, and his attachment to me. He took me by the hand, and dragged me after him. His house was a short way off; we arrived at the door; he pushed me in, and cried out with all his might: "Margherita! Margherita! here is M. Goldoni." Margherita descended, and embraced me; she urged me to ascend, forced me along, and I was obliged to yield.

The Venetian lady asked me a number of questions concerning my person, which I was ready enough to satisfy; but recollecting the servant of the clergyman, I testified some uneasiness. They

asked me the cause, and when I told them, Scacciati set out instantly with some money for the man, who was waiting for me.

When I was alone with my country-woman, I related my history to her, and she told me hers.

Scacciati was not her uncle, but a knave who had carried her off from her parents, and sold her to a rich man, who quitted her in two months, having paid the broker much more handsomely than the lady. She was tired of living with this drone, who spent with profusion what she gained with repugnance. She had gained a great deal of money at Milan, and they had left that town with more debts than cash. It was the same thing at Brescia. Scacciati was the most vicious and unreasonable man in the world: she wished to get rid of him, and asked my advice with respect to the execution of her project.

If I had been rich, I should have delivered her from her tyrant; but in my present circumstances, I could give her no other advice but that of applying to her relations, and endeavouring to be reconciled to those who had a right to claim her.

While we were conversing in this manner, Scacciati returned; he saw us close to one another, and rallied me in the idea that the lady had been endeavouring to make me forget my chagrins. The wicked wretch! he thought of nothing but debauchery.

I was sorry to be obliged to condemn him while he was endeavouring to oblige me. "Come," said he, "since we have nobody here to-day, we shall sup all three together. Follow me, sir." I followed him into a very well furnished room with a canopy bed. "This," said he, "is the room of ceremony of the lady, you may occupy it alone or with company, as you please."

The place shocked me; I wished to leave it instantly. He had the cunning to discern my repugnance, and he shewed me a small closet, which at that hour, situated as I then was, I did not think proper to refuse; but I told him at the same time, that I was determined to set out next day.

Having in vain endeavoured to persuade me to stay longer, Scacciati told me candidly, and with a warmth of heart which I should have admired, if it had not proceeded from a corrupt soul, that he knew I was in distress, and he offered me all the assistance that I might need. "Very well," said I to him; "since you are disposed to oblige me, lend me six sequins, and I will give you my note for them." He gave me the six sequins, but refused the note, and without hearing another word from me, he left the closet where we were, and ordered supper.

We had a very good meal, and I retired to my small bed. Next morning I breakfasted with the supposed uncle and niece, thanked both of them, and set out post for Verona.

As I shall have no farther occasion to speak of these two personages, I shall in two words inform the reader, that I saw the lady some years afterwards very well married at Venice, and that M. Scacciati finished his career by being sentenced to the galleys.

In the road over the stoney plain from Brescia to Verona, I could not avoid making reflections on the fortunate and unfortunate adventures which had happened to me, having always experienced something bad along with the good, and something good along with the bad.

I was led in a particular manner to dwell most on my last resource in Brescia. I had been stripped of my all by knaves, and another knave came to my assistance; and how was it possible for virtue to penetrate into a corrupted heart? No; Scacciati was merely generous towards me through self-love and ostentation. But whatever was his motive, I was not the less bound in gratitude to him.

Providence makes use of various means for the distribution of its favours. The wicked man is frequently made to assist the upright: and we ought to bless the author of the benefit, and feel gratitude towards the immediate agent.

On arriving at Desenzano, I dined in the same inn on the Lake di Garda, where I had twice before slept, and I arrived at Verona at night-fall.

Verona is one of the finest cities of Italy. It

deserves without doubt, that I should speak of its beauties, its ornaments, its academies, and the talents which it has produced and fostered in every age; but this disgression would lead me too far; and I shall merely confine myself to the mention of the monument which has some relation perhaps to the subject of my memoirs.

At Verona there is an amphitheatre, the work of the Romans. It is not known whether it belongs to the period of Trajan or Domitian; but it is in such excellent preservation, that it may be used at present as well as in the time when it was constructed.

This vast edifice, calléd in Italy *l'Arena di Verona*, is of an oval form; its greatest interior diameter is two hundred and twenty-five Paris feet, and the smallest one hundred and thirty-three. Forty-five rows of marble steps surround it, which are capable of containing twenty thousand persons seated at their ease.

In the central space, spectacles of all kinds are given: courses, jousts, bull-fights; and in summer, plays are even represented with no other light than that of the natural day.

For this purpose, in the middle of the space, there is erected, on very strong supports, a theatre in boards, which is taken down every winter and refitted again in the fine season; and the best companies of Italy occasionally resort here to display their talents.

There are no boxes for the spectators; a space inclosed off with boards, forms a vast pit with chairs. The lower orders are allowed, for a trifling expense, to range themselves along the steps in front of the theatre; and notwithstanding the small expense of admission, there is not a theatre in Italy that yields so much as the Arena.

On leaving my inn the day after my arrival, I observed play-bills, in which I read that "Harlequin mute through fear" was to be acted that day.

I went in the afternoon, and placed myself in the enclosure, in the middle of the Arena, where there was a very numerous assembly.

The curtain was drawn; an apology was to be delivered for the change of the piece, which was not the "mute through fear," as had been promised, but another, the name of which I do not now remember. But what an agreeable surprise for me! The actor who came forward to address the public, was no other than my dear friend Casali, the proposer and proprietor of my Belisarius.

I quitted my place to get upon the stage. As the place was not very extensive, my intention was immediately opposed; I asked for Casali; he came forward, and appeared quite enchanted to see me. He made way for me, and introduced me to the director, the principal actress, the second and third, and the whole company. All were eager to

speak to me. Casali took me apart; we went behind a curtain; the decoration was changed and I remained exposed to the audience; I escaped with all possible expedition from the hisses with which I was assailed. This was rather an unlucky prelude for an author; but the Veronese have sufficiently indemnified me in the sequel for this little disagreeable incident. The company was the one which Casali mentioned to me at Milan; it belonged to the Grimani theatre, of Saint Samuel, in Venice, where it played every autumn and winter, passing the spring and summer on the main land.

The company was under the direction of M. Imer, a very polite and respectable Genoese, who invited me to dine with him next day, which was a holiday with them. I accepted his invitation, and promised in return to read him my Belisarius. We were all in unison, and satisfied with one another.

Next day I repaired accordingly to the director's, where I found all the company assembled. Imer wished to treat his companions with the novelty which Casali had been mentioning to them. The dinner was splendid, and the gaiety of the comedians quite charming. They made couplets, and sung bacchanalian songs. They anticipated every wish of mine; they were so many crimps anxious to enlist me.

When dinner was over, we retired to the director's room, where I read my piece. It was

listened to with attention, and at the conclusion, the applause was general and complete. Imer took me by the hand, and with a magisterial tone pronounced, "Bravo!" I was complimented by every one; Casali wept for joy. One of the actors asked me very politely, if his comrades were to have the good fortune of being the first to represent my piece.—Casali rose, and in a decided tone, answered: "Yes, Sir, M. Goldoni did me the honour to labour for me," and laying hold of the piece which was lying on the table: "I shall," said he, "with the good pleasure of the author, proceed to copy it out myself."—Without waiting the author's answer he carried it off instantly.

Imer took me apart, and requested me to accept of a single apartment in the same house beside his own; he invited me also to his table all the time that his company should remain at Verona.—In my circumstances I could refuse nothing.

Without having had the advantage of a regular education, Imer possessed intellect and information; he was passionately fond of comedy: he was naturally eloquent, and could have supported with great ease the part of an extempore lover according to the Italian practice, had his height and figure corresponded with his talents. Being short, squat, with a short neck or rather with none, small eyes, and a little flat nose, he appeared ridiculous in

serious characters, and overcharged characters or caricatures were not in fashion.

He possessed a good voice; he contrived the introduction into comedy of musical interludes, which had so long been inseparable from the grand opera, and had at last been suppressed to make room for ballets.

The comic opera had its origin at Naples and Rome, but it was unknown in Lombardy and the Venetian dominions, so that the project of Imer succeeded, and the novelty was productive of much pleasure, and highly profitable to the comedians.

He had two actresses in this company for interludes; the one a very pretty and a very able widow of the name of Zanetta Casanova, who played the part of young lovers in comedy; and the other a woman possessed of a charming voice, but who had no talents for acting. This was Madam Agnese Amurat, the same singer whom I mentioned as employed by me in my serenade at Venice.

Neither of these two women knew a single note of music, and Imer was precisely in the same situation; but they were all three possessed of taste, a correct ear, and a perfect execution; and the public were satisfied with them.

The first interlude they began with was the *Cantatrice*, a small piece composed by me at Feltre for a private theatre; and I had thus contributed to the advantage of the Venice company without knowing it, and without being known. No won-

der then that I stood high in the opinion of the director, to whom I was announced by Casali as the author of the *Cantatrice;* and this was the true cause of the kindness with which I was treated by him; for, in general, we give nothing without an equivalent; and my Belisarius would have been insufficient, had I not given a proof of my qualifications for dramatic poetry.

Imer, who possessed judgment and penetration, foresaw that my Belisarius would every where be successful. This he was not displeased at; but he was at the same time desirous that his person and his new employment should participate in the success which he anticipated. He requested me, therefore, to compose an interlude for three voices with all possible dispatch, that there might be time to set it to music.

I composed an interlude in three acts, which I called *La Pupilla.* I took the plot of this piece from the private life of the director; I perceived that he had a decided inclination for the widow of his company; I saw also that he was jealous of her, and I brought him accordingly into the piece.

Imer was not long in perceiving it, but the interlude appeared to him so well written, and the attack so respectful and delicate, that he easily pardoned me this piece of pleasantry. He overpowered me with thanks and applause, and instantly dispatched my work to Venice to the musician whom he had already engaged.

Meanwhile Belisarius had been copied, and the parts distributed. A few days afterwards the first rehearsal took place with the parts in their hands; and the piece produced a still greater impression at the second reading than at the first.

Casali, more and more satisfied with me, after assuring me that the director and proprietor of the theatre would take care to recompense me, requested me to do him the favour to receive as a particular mark of his gratitude, a present of six sequins. Scacciati entered my head that moment, and I thanked Casali, and took the sequins from Casali with the one hand, and sent them off to Scacciati with the other.

Such is my system. I have always endeavoured to avoid every thing low and pitiful; but I was never proud. I have afforded assistance when in my power to those who stood in need of it, and I have in like manner received, and even demanded assistance from others, without hesitation and without a blush, when I was in want of it.

I remained tranquilly at Verona till the end of September. At last I set out with Imer for Venice in a post-chaise, and we arrived there at eight o'clock in the evening of the same day. Imer conducted me into his house, shewed me the room which he destined for me, introduced me to his wife and his daughters, and as I had a strong desire to see my maternal aunt, I requested him to dispense with my supping with his family.

I was very desirous of obtaining information respecting Madam St. *** and her daughter, and learning whether they still entertained any pretensions to me. My aunt assured me that I might keep myself perfectly tranquil, that these high-minded ladies, on hearing that I had entered into an engagement with comedians, had set me down as unworthy to approach them, and entertained no other sentiments for me but those of contempt and indignation.

"So much the better," said I; "so much the better; this is still another advantage which I shall owe to my talents. With the comedians I am like an artist in his workshop. They are worthy people, much more estimable than the slaves of pride and ambition."

I next spoke of my family affairs. My mother, who was still at Modena, was in good health, and my debts were almost wholly paid off. I supped with my aunt and my relations.

After taking leave of them to return to my host, I chose the longest road, and went round by

burden does not fall on individuals, but is defrayed by an additional drawing of the lottery every year.

Besides this general illumination, there is that of the shops, which at all seasons remain open till ten o'clock in the evening, and a great number are not shut till midnight, and several are never shut at all.

Every thing eatable is to be found displayed at midnight in Venice, the same as in the middle of the day; all the taverns are open, and suppers are in preparation in every inn and hotel; for company dinners and suppers are not common in Venice, but parties of pleasure and pic-nics bring together individuals with greater liberty and gaiety.

In summer the square of St. Mark and its environs are frequented by night as much as by day. The coffee-houses are full of fashionable company, males and females of every description.

In every square, street, and canal, singing is to be heard. The shopkeepers sing while they sell their wares; the workmen sing on quitting their labours; the gondoleers sing while waiting for their masters. The essential character of the people is gaiety, and the character of the Venetian language is pleasantry.

Delighted to see my country again, which always appeared to me more and more extraordinary and amusing, I returned to my new lodging, where I found Imer waiting for me, who informed me of his intention of calling on M. Grimani, the pro-

prietor of the theatre, next day, and of taking me with him to be introduced to his excellency, if I had no other engagements.

As I was unengaged I accepted his proposition, and we accordingly went together. M. Grimani was the most polite man in the world; and he had nothing of that inconvenient haughtiness, which is as prejudicial to the great as it is humiliating to inferiors. Illustrious by birth, and estimable from his talents, he was desirous only of being beloved, and his amiable qualities captivated every heart.

He received me with great kindness, and engaged me to labour for the company which he maintained; and by way of farther encouragement, he gave me hopes, that as he was also proprietor of the theatre of St. John Chrysostom, and undertaker of the grand opera, he would endeavour to employ me and attach me to that theatre.

Quite pleased with his excellency, and the kind offices which Imer had rendered me with him, I gave up every thought but that of deserving the public suffrage.

The first representation of Belisarius was fixed for Saint Catharine, a period when the vacations of the courts are at an end, and when the company return from the country. In the mean time we were occupied with rehearsals, sometimes of my tragi-comedy, and at other times of my interlude; and as my occupations were not very considerable, I prepared something new for the Carnival.

I undertook the composition of a tragedy called *Rosimonda*, and another interlude called *la Birba*. I derived the plot of the large piece from *la Rosimonda del Mute*, a paltry romance of the last century, and the smaller one was a picture of the Jugglers of the Square of Saint Mark, whose language, humour, tricks, and whole behaviour, I had studied with great care.

The comic traits that I made use of in my interludes were so much grain that I sowed in my field to ripen one day into an agreeable and profitable harvest.

CHAP. XIII.

*First Representation of Belisarius, and its Success—First Representation of La Pupilla—Of Rosimonda—Of La Birba—Close of the Theatre—My Comedians at Padua—Changes which took place in the Company—My Predilection for a beautiful Actress—Griselda, a Tragedy—My Journey to Udine—Interview with my old Acquaintance the Daughter of the Seller of Lemonade—Piece prepared for the Opening of the Theatre at Venice—Death of the beautiful Actress—My Return to Venice—Conversation with my Mother—Proceeding of Miss * * *—Return of the Company to Venice—My Attachment for Madam Passalacqua—Her Infidelities.*

At length, on the 24th November 1734, my Belisarius appeared on the stage for the first time. It was my debût, and it could not have been more brilliant or satisfactory for me.

My piece was listened to with a silence alto-

degree that the actors were quite affected. Some wept while others laughed, and these different effects flowed from the same feeling of joy.

The author of the piece is not called for in Italy for the purpose of being seen and applauded on the stage. But when the principal actor presented himself to announce the play for the succeeding evening, all the spectators at once cried: *Questa, questa, questa;* that is to say, the same, the same; and the curtain was dropped. The same piece was accordingly given next day, and it was continued to be given every day till the 14th of December, when the autumn performances were closed.

This was a very fortunate commencement for me, for the piece was by no means so valuable as it had been estimated, and I hold it myself in so little consideration that it shall never appear in the collection of my works.

Elegant literature is as well understood and as much cultivated at Venice, as in any other place; but the connoisseurs could not avoid applauding a work, the imperfections of which were well known to them. Seeing the superiority of my piece over the farces, and other ordinary productions of the comedians, they were induced to augur from this first attempt a succession of other pieces capable of exciting emulation and paving the way for a reform of the Italian theatre.

The principal defect of my piece was the appearance of Belisarius with his eyes put out and

bleeding; with this exception, the play, which I called a tragi-comedy, was not destitute of merit: and it interested the spectator in a suitable and natural manner. My heroes were men and not demi-gods, their passions had the degree of elevation suitable to their rank, but they appeared with the properties of human nature with which we are acquainted, and their virtues and vices were not carried to an imaginary excess.

My style was not elegant, and my versification has never been any way sublime; but this was precisely what was requisite to bring back to reason a public accustomed to hyperboles, antitheses, and every thing ridiculously gigantic and romantic.

At the sixth representation of Belisarius, Imer thought he might add *la Pupilla*, and this little piece was very well received by the public; but while Imer supposed the interlude supported the tragi-comedy, it was on the contrary, the tragi-comedy which supported the interlude.

At all events I was a great gainer; for the public seeing me come forward at the same time in the two walks and in a manner altogether new, I was honoured with the general esteem of my countrymen, and I received the most flattering and distinguished encouragement from them.

On this occasion I made an acquaintance with his Excellency Nicolas Balbi, a Venetian patrician and senator, whose warm and constant protection has always been highly honourable to me, and

whose opinions, credit, and adherents hav ealways been of the greatest utility to me.

On the 17th January my Rosimonda was represented for the first time. It was not damned; but after Belisarius I could hardly flatter myself with an equally brilliant success: It had four very tolerable representations. On the fifth, Imer supported it with a new interlude. La Birba gave high pleasure; this very comic and very gay trifle maintained Rosimonda during four other representations; but at last we were obliged to return to Belisarius. This piece had the same success on being resumed as at first, and Belisarius and *la Birba* were played together till Shrove-Tuesday, and finished the Carnival, and with them we terminated the theatrical year.

The theatres are not opened at Venice till the beginning of October; but during the fifteen days of the fair of the Ascension, there is a grand opera, and sometimes two, which have sometimes as many as twenty representations.

Grimani the proprietor of the theatre of Saint Samuel had an opera in that season represented on his account; and he attached me to that spectacle, as he had promised.

The drama which they were to give this year, was not new; they had chosen *La Griselda*, an opera of Apostolo Zeno and Pariati, who worked in conjunction before the departure of Zeno for Vienna, in the emperor's service, and the composer

who was to set it to music was the Abbé Vivaldi, called *il prete rosso*, the red priest, on account of his hair.—He was much better known by this nick-name than by his real name.

This ecclesiastic, who was an excellent performer on the violin and an indifferent composer, had trained and instructed in singing Miss Giraud, a young singer, born at Venice, but the daughter of a French hair-dresser. She was not pretty, but graceful; her shape was elegant, her eyes and hair were beautiful, and her mouth charming; she had very little voice, but a great deal of action. She was to represent the character of Griselda.

M. Grimani sent me to the musicians to make the necessary changes in the opera, both for the sake of shortening it, and changing the position and character of the airs to suit the actors and the composer.—I called therefore on the Abbé Vivaldi, and announced myself as having come from his Excellency Grimani.—I found him surrounded with music, and with the breviary in his hand.—He rose, and made the sign of the cross, put his breviary aside, and then after the usual compliments—"What motive, sir," said he, "procures me the pleasure of seeing you?"—"His Excellency Grimani has employed me to make such changes as you may deem necessary in the opera of next fair—I therefore wish to be informed, sir, what are your intentions."—"So, so, you are employed to make the changes in the opera of Griselda;

M. Lalli is not now then attached to the theatre of M. Grimani?"—"M. Lalli, who is very old, will always enjoy the profits, the epistles dedicatory, and the sale of books, which I do not care for—I shall have the pleasure of being employed in an exercise highly amusing for me, and I shall have the honour of commencing under the orders of M. Vivaldi."—(The Abbé resumed his breviary, made a second sign of the cross, and returned no answer.)—"Sir," said I, "I should be sorry to withdraw you from your religious occupation; I will wait upon you another time."—"I know very well, my dear sir, that you have talents for poetry. I have seen your Belisarius, which gave me a great deal of pleasure; but this is a very different affair; it is possible to make a tragedy and an epic poem if you will, and yet not be able to write a single musical quatrain."—"Be so good as allow me to look at your drama."—"O yes, with all my heart; where is Griselda gone to? It was here ....*Deus in adjutorium meum intende*....*Domine* ....*Domine*....*Domine*....it was here this very instant....*Domine ad adjuvandum*....Ah, here it is.—See, sir, this scene between Gualtiere and Griselda is very interesting and touching.—The author has tacked a pathetic air to it, but Miss Giraud is not fond of languishing songs; she wishes something expressive and full of agitation, an expression of the passions by different means, by words interrupted, for example, by sighs, with

action and motion; I don't know whether you understand me?"—"Yes, sir, I understand you perfectly well; besides, I have had the honour of hearing Miss Giraud, and I know that her voice is not very powerful."—"What, sir, do you mean to insult my scholar?—She is good at every thing, she can sing any thing."—"Yes, sir, you are right, give me the book, and allow me to proceed."—"No, sir, I cannot part with it, I am in want of it, and am pressed for time."—"Very well, sir, if you are pressed lend it to me a moment, and I will instantly satisfy you."—"Instantly?"—"Yes, sir, instantly."

The Abbé laughed at my attempt, and gave me the drama, and paper and ink, resumed his breviary, and walked about, reciting his psalms and hymns.—I read over the scene with which I was already acquainted; I recapitulated all that the musician desired, and, in less than a quarter of an hour I wrote down an air of eight verses, divided into two parts.—I then called my ecclesiastic, and shewed him my work.—Vivaldi read it, his countenance brightened up, he read it again, threw down his prayer book, and called Miss Giraud.—When she entered, he exclaimed "Ah, here is a wonderful man, here is an excellent poet:—read this air: this gentleman composed it here without stirring from the spot in less than a quarter of an hour."—Then turning towards me he said: "I beg your pardon, sir;" and he embraced me, and

protested he would never have any other poet than myself.

He confided the drama to me, with orders to make some other changes; in all of which he was satisfied with me, and the opera succeeded admirably.

I was now initiated in the opera, in comedy, and in the interludes, which were the forerunners of the Italian comic operas.

The company of Grimani had gone to Padua, to perform there during the spring season, and I was expected there with impatience to give my pieces.

When I got clear of the opera of Venice, I repaired to Padua. My novelties made their appearance at the theatre of that place, and the applauses of my brethren the doctors, were equal to those of my countrymen.

I found that great changes had taken place in the company; the waiting-maid had gone to Dresden, having been engaged by that court, and the harlequin had been discharged; and M. Campagnani, a Milanese, the delight of the amateurs of his country, but insupportable when acting with professional actors, had been adopted in his place.

But the greatest loss experienced by the company was that of the widow Casanova, who, notwithstanding her connexion with the director, had accepted of an engagement in the service of the King of Poland. She was succeeded as a singer

by Madam Passalacqua, who at the same time performed the characters of waiting-maids; and for the parts of lovers, they had made an acquisition of a Madam Ferramonti, a charming actress, who was young, beautiful, very amiable, and very intelligent, full of talents and interesting qualities.

I was not long in discerning her merit, and I attached myself in a particular manner to her; I became the friend of her husband, who was not employed in the company; and I formed the project of making an excellent actress of this young woman. The other women did not fail to become jealous of her. I experienced several disagreeable occurrences in consequence; and I should have suffered still more, if she had not been carried off by death the same year.

After having been a few days at Padua, the director spoke to me of the novelties which it would be necessary to prepare for Venice. Madam Collucci, surnamed *La Romana*, acted the principal female parts in the company alternately with La Bastona; and notwithstanding her age of fifty, which neither paint nor dress could by any means conceal, her voice was so clear and so soft, her pronunciation so just, and her graces so natural and engaging, that, judging from these circumstances, she might still have been considered in the bloom of youth.

Madam Collucci possessed a tragedy of Pariati, intituled Griselda, a favourite piece of mine; but

it was in prose, and I was employed to put it into verse.

Nothing was more easy for me; I had been employed in a similar way at Venice, and the Griselda of Pariati was neither more nor less than the opera which he composed in conjunction with Apostolo Zeno.

I gladly undertook to satisfy La Romana; but I did not exactly follow the authors of the drama; I made a number of changes, and added the father of Griselda, a virtuous man, who had seen his daughter ascend the throne without any feeling of pride, and who saw her descend from it again without regret. I invented a new character, to give a part to my friend Casali. This episode gave an air of novelty to the tragedy, rendered it more interesting, and made me pass for the author of the piece.

In the edition of my works at Turin, in 1777, by Guibert and Orgeas, this Griselda is printed as a piece belonging to me. I detest plagiarism, and declare that I am not the inventor of it.

My comedians had given at Padua the number of representations agreed upon, and they were preparing to visit Udine in Venetian Friuli.

Imer proposed that I should accompany him. I had nothing more to fear from the daughter of the lemonade-vender, who was now married, and I consented to follow the company; but I did not travel with the director. I made my excuse to

him, and set out in an excellent carriage with Madam Ferramonti and the good man her husband.

My works were very much applauded at Udine. That town was prepossessed in my favour; and the author of the Easter poetry was, in their opinion, a very excellent dramatic poet.

The daughter of the lemonade-vender, whom I never loved, but whom I had known and conversed with, and who had ultimately thrown me into a very distressing embarrassment, knew that I was at Udine, and was desirous of seeing me. She was married to a man in her own sphere of life, and she wrote me a very curious and engaging letter. I called on her at the house she pointed out to me, and found her very much changed: our conversation was not of long continuance; and I had no desire to sacrifice my new inclinations for her; I only saw her a second time, and never afterwards.

I had, besides, my theatrical occupations to attend to, which interested me very much: I was anxious to execute something extraordinary for the opening of the theatre in the capital. I ruminated on several subjects, and I communicated some of them to the director. We fixed on the following, which I immediately began to carry into execution.

It was an entertainment divided into three different parts, and which filled up the three acts of an ordinary representation.

The first part was merely a literary assembly.

All the actors, at the drawing of the curtain, were seated, and disposed on the stage in the dress of common citizens. The director opened the assembly by a discourse on comedy, and the duties of comedians, and concluded with complimenting the public. The actors and actresses recited in turns, couplets, sonnets, and madrigals, suited to their parts; and the four masks, who were then uncovered, delivered verses in the different languages of the characters which they represented.

The second part was an outline of a comedy in one act, in which I endeavoured to assign interesting situations to the new actors.

The third part contained a comic opera, in three acts, and in verse, intituled the Foundation of Venice.

This little piece, the first comic opera perhaps which ever appeared in the Venetian dominions, is to be found in the twenty-eighth volume of the Turin edition of my works.

Imer was very well pleased with my idea, and the manner in which I executed it. The whole company were enchanted with it; Bastona alone complained of me; and said aloud, that in the piece of quackery with which the theatre was to open, I had given Madam Ferramonti, who was only a second-rate actress, verses which ought to have been allotted to those of a higher cast; and in this manner she contrived to instigate La Romana to complain also, and to persecute me.

Alas! poor Ferramonti was not long the cause of jealousy to her companions,—she was pregnant; the period of her delivery was announced by previous circumstances of an alarming kind; nature refused to assist her; the midwife was embarrassed; an accoucheur was sent for, who found the child in an improper position.—They had recourse to the Cesarean operation; the child was still born, and the mother soon followed it.

The husband called upon me; he was distracted with grief, and I was in the same state; I could no longer remain in the town, or bear the countenances of the women, who enjoyed my affliction; and under the pretence of going to join my mother, who was on her return from Modena, I instantly set out for Venice.

On arriving at Venice, the first thing I did was to embrace my mother; we had a long conversation together; my Venetian property was disencumbered; my Modena revenue increased; my brother had re-entered the army, and my mother was desirous that I should again resume my profession of advocate.

I reasoned with her on the subject, and declared that as I had once quitted it, and made my appearance in my country in a character altogether different, I could no longer flatter myself with the confidence which I did not merit; while the career which I had entered upon, was equally honourable, and might in time turn out lucrative.

My mother, with tears in her eyes, said that she durst not oppose my wish, that she reproached herself with having seduced me from the Criminal Chancery, and that, having confidence in my reason, honour, and activity, she left me at full liberty to choose my own profession.

I thanked her and embraced her a second time; and from one thing to another I came to the article of Madam St. * * * and her daughter, quite satisfied that the contempt expressed by these ladies for the employment chosen by me, had relieved me from all fear and embarrassment.

"By no means," said my mother, "you are quite mistaken; Madam St. * * * and her daughter have waited on me; they overpowered me with their politeness, and they spoke to me of you as an estimable and wonderful young man. Your distinguished success has rendered you in their eyes worthy of their consideration, and they still reckon on you."

"No," said I, with a tone of indignation; "no, my mother, I will never connect myself with a family by whom I was deceived, ruined, and at last treated with disdain."

"Do not alarm yourself," replied my mother; "they are not richer than they were; I shall return their visit, and endeavour to reason with them, and I undertake to procure your release. Let us talk of something else," continued she; "tell me what you have been doing since our separation."

I instantly satisfied her, and communicated several of my adventures, though I concealed also a great number. I made her successively weep, laugh, and tremble: we dined with our relations; my mother was anxious to tell the company what I had imparted to her; but she only confused matters and excited their curiosity; and I was myself obliged to tell every thing over again; when, exhilarated by the gaiety of the repast, I ventured to mention a number of particulars which were quite new to my mother. "Ah, you knave!" she exclaimed from time to time, "you did not tell me this, or that, or that other." I passed my time very agreeably, and made old uncles and aunts laugh at my expense, who never laughed before in their lives. My conversation was perhaps in those days more engaging than my writings.

Towards the end of September, my company of comedians returned to the capital; we rehearsed our opening piece, and on the fourth of October it appeared on the stage.

The novelty produced surprise; the Literary Assembly was relished; the comedy in one act failed on account of the Harlequin, who was not an agreeable actor; the comic opera was well received, and became a standing piece at the theatre.

The director was satisfied, because the musical part obtained the preference; but he was not contented with Madam Passalacqua, whose voice was

false, her tone monotonous, and her features disfigured by grimace. Imer wished to support interludes, and a musician of the orchestra suggested the means to him.

This was an old man of sixty, who had married a young girl of eighteen, whom he taught to sing to his violin. The young woman had abilities; Imer was pleased with her, and requested me to take care of her, which I consented to with great pleasure, as she was very pretty and very docile.

Madam Passalacqua became jealous of her; she made some fruitless endeavours at Udine to gain me over, and again attempted the like at Venice.

I received a card from her one day, requesting me to visit her at five o'clock in the evening. I could not decently refuse, and therefore I accordingly went. She received me dressed like a nymph of Cythera, made me sit down beside her on a sofa, and said the most flattering and gallant things in the world to me. I knew her, and was on my guard; and I supported the conversation with a heroic self-denial. Besides, I did not like her; she was too spare, her eyes were green, and her pale and yellow complexion was covered with an abundance of paint.

Madam Passalacqua, piqued at my indifference, had recourse to all her powers of address: "Is it possible," said she, "that, of all the women of this company, I alone am so unfortunate as to displease

you? I know what is due to myself: so long as I saw you attached to Madam Ferramonti, I felt the respect due to merit; but to see you give the preference to a stupid young woman, a woman without talents or education, is both shameful for you, and humiliating to me.—Alas! I do not aspire to the felicity of possessing your heart; my merit is not such as to allow me to flatter myself with any hope of the kind; but I am an actress; and have no other profession; I have no other resources; young and without experience, I require exercise, counsel, and protection: were I so fortunate as to please at Venice, my reputation would be established and my fortune secured; you could contribute to my success; with your talents, and your intelligence, in merely giving up your idle moments to me, you would render me happy; but you abandon me, you despise me.—O Heavens! what have I done to you?"—(here she dropped a few tears.) I own I was softened by her discourse, but her tears quite overpowered me: I promised her my assistance, care, and kind offices. This however she was not satisfied with; she wished the total sacrifice of the wife of the musician: but the proposition shocked me; I told her that it was going too far, and I wished to take my leave.

Madam Passalacqua prevented me from going, and assuming a tone of gaiety, began to look out and to praise the fine weather. She proposed that we should enjoy the cool of the evening together

in a gondola which was waiting for her; I refused; she laughed and insisted, and taking hold of my arm, dragged me along: How could I avoid accompanying her?

We entered this vehicle, where there is as much conveniency as in the best room. We rowed for the middle of the vast space of water which surrounds the city of Venice. There our dextrous gondolier drew the small hind curtain; made a helm of his oar, and allowed his gondola to float at the mercy of the waves.

We chatted a good deal in a gay and agreeable manner, and after some time the night appeared to us advanced, and we knew not where we were. I wished to look at my watch, but it was too dark to see; I opened the small curtain behind, and asked the gondoleer what hour it was. "Faith, sir," said he, "I do not know the hour, but it is the lover's hour, if I am not mistaken."—"Let us return," said I, "to the lady's house." The gondoleer took to his oar again, and turned the prow of the gondola towards the city, singing all the way the twenty-sixth strophe of the sixteenth canto of the Jerusalem Delivered.

We entered Madam Passalacqua's at half-past ten o'clock in the evening, where a delicious supper was served up to us. We supped tête-à-tête; I parted from her at midnight, determined on making her some return for the kindness with which she had overpowered me.

I continued to remain in the director's house till my mother could find apartments where we might lodge suitably together. On the day following this singular evening which I have just mentioned, I saw my landlord, and told him that the brutal and jealous character of the old musician had at length disgusted me, and I requesed him to be dispensed from the care which he wished me to take of the young woman. I next sketched an interlude for Madam Passalacqua, whom I waited on for the purpose of reading to her the first proof of my gratitude.

In the mean time, Griselda was brought on the stage. This tragedy was received by the public as a new work; it afforded great satisfaction and pleasure, and drew crowds to the theatre. La Romana, who for twenty years had been seen on that theatre, was applauded in this piece as if it had been her debût. Casali was interesting, and drew tears from the audience; and Vitalba, who had so well supported the part of Belisarius, surpassed himself in Gualtiere.

Vitalba brings me immediately to Madam Passalacqua. He was a handsome man, an excellent comedian, fond of women, and a great libertine. He attempted Passalacqua, and it required no great efforts to subdue her. I learned that during my intimacy with that actress, she also admitted the visits of Vitalba; I heard that they frequently went out together; and I was piqued and absented

myself from that faithless woman without deigning to complain, or to explain to her the motive of my absence.

She wrote me a touching and pathetic letter; in my answer, I related all that I knew of her improper behaviour. She sent me a second letter, in which, without attempting to deny any thing, or frame any excuse, she requested me to visit her for the last time, as she had something to confide to me, in which her profession, honour, and life were concerned.

"Shall I go, or not?" I hesitated for some time, but at length, whether from curiosity, or a desire to give vent to my rage, I determined on going.

I entered without being announced, and found her stretched on a sofa, with her head supported on a pillow. I saluted her; she said nothing; I asked her what she had to tell me, but she gave me no answer. The blood mounted up into my countenance, I became blind and furious with rage, I gave free scope to my resentment, and I poured out all the execrations and reproaches which she deserved without the least feeling of restraint. The actress did not utter a single word; from time to time she wiped a tear from her eye; I dreaded these insidious tears and wished to depart. "Go, sir," said she, with a trembling voice; "my resolution is taken; you shall hear of me in a few moments."—I did not allow myself to be detained

by these vague words, and proceeded towards the door; I returned to bid her adieu; I saw her arm raised, and the point of a stiletto directed against her bosom. Struck with terror at the sight, I lost all power over myself; I ran and threw myself at her feet, I took the weapon from her hands, I wiped away her tears; I pardoned her every thing, promised every thing, and remained with her.—We dined together, and ..... we were on our former footing.

Satisfied with my victory, I blessed the moment when I turned back on going out; I was enamoured, I loved her sincerely; I was convinced that she loved me also. I invented reasons to excuse her failings; Vitalba had taken her by surprise, she had repented and renounced Vitalba for ever, for ever ..... and in a few days I learned, beyond the possibility of doubt, that Madam Passalacqua and Vitalba dined and supped together, and laughed at my simplicity!



CHAP. XIV.

My Don Juan, or the Libertine—Complete Vengeance against La Passalacqua—My Journey to Genoa—View of that Town—Origin of the Royal Lottery—My Marriage—My Return to Venice with my Wife—Rinaldo di Montalbano, a Tragi-Comedy—Henry King of Sicily, a Tragedy—Arrival at Venice of the famous Harlequin Sacchi and his Family—Their Entrance into the Company of St. Samuel—Acquisition of other good Actors—The Accomplished Man, a Comedy of Character, in three Acts, partly written and partly sketched—Gustavus Vasa, an Opera—Short Digression respecting Metastasio and Apostolo Zeno—Conversation with the latter about my Opera—The Prodigal, a Comedy in three Acts, partly written and partly sketched—Complaints of the Actors with Masks—The Thirty-two Misfortunes of Harlequin, a sketched Comedy—A few Words respecting Sacchi the Harlequin—The Critical Night, a sketched Comedy.

THE infidelities of an actress by whom I had been deceived, were detailed by me in the preceding chapter, neither by way of ornamenting my memoirs, nor drawing forth compliments on my simplicity; but as the anecdote was inserted in a work, which served to revenge me, I thought I could not avoid giving a historical account of the episode before speaking of the principal subject.

Every body knows the wretched Spanish play which the Italians call *Il Convitato di Pietra*, the French *Le Festin de Pierre*, and the English Don Juan.

In Italy I always considered it with horror, and I could not conceive how such a farce could for so long a time draw crowds together, and prove the delight of a polished people.

The Italian comedians were themselves astonished; and, either by way of joke or from ignorance, some of them used to say that the author of Don Juan had entered into a compact with the devil to support it.

I should never have thought of labouring on such a work, but having learned enough of French to be able to read it, I found that Moliere and Thomas Corneille had employed their talents on the same subject; I undertook also to give a similar treat to my countrymen, that I might be on somewhat decent terms with the devil.

I could not, it is true, give the same title to it; for in my piece, the statue of the Commander neither speaks, moves, nor goes to sup in town. I called it Don Juan, as Moliere had done, with the addition of the Libertine.

I could not dispense with the thunder which strikes Don Juan, because the wicked deserve to be punished; but I brought about the event in such a way, that it might either be an immediate effect of the wrath of God, or might proceed from a com-

bination of secondary causes under the direction of the laws of Providence.

As in this comedy, which is in five acts, and in blank verse, I neither employed Harlequin nor any other Italian mask; I supplied their place by a shepherd and shepherdess, who, with Don Juan were to be recognized for Passalacqua, Goldoni, and Vitalba, and to represent on the stage the improper behaviour of the one, the simplicity of the other, and the wickedness of the third.

Eliza was the name of the shepherdess, and Passalacqua's name was Elizabeth. The name of Carino which I gave the shepherd, was, with the exception of one letter, the diminutive of my christian name *(Carlino)*; and Vitalba, under the name of Don Juan, was represented in his true character.

I put the same discourse in the mouth of Eliza as that which Passalacqua had made use of to deceive me; she had recourse on the stage to the tears and the stiletto of which I had been the dupe; and in this manner I took my revenge of the actress, at the same time that Carino was revenged on his faithless shepherdess.

When the piece was finished, the next consideration was its representation. I foresaw that Passalacqua would not consent to represent her own character on the stage. I informed the director and proprietor of the theatre beforehand, and distributed the parts without the piece having been read. La Passalacqua soon saw through the cha

racter which she had to act, and complained to the director and his Excellency Grimani. She protested to both, that she would not appear in the piece, unless the author made some very essential changes; but it was determined that she should either act Eliza as it stood, or quit the company.

Alarmed at this alternative, she instantly resolved to out-brave every consideration, and learned and acted her part in the most perfect manner.

At the first representation of this piece, the public, accustomed to see in the *Convitato di Pietra*, Harlequin save himself from shipwreck with the assistance of two bladders, and Don Juan make his escape from the waves of the sea perfectly dry, and his clothes quite untouched, did not know what to make of the air of dignity which the author had given to an old piece of buffoonery.—But as my adventure with Passalacqua and Vitalba was pretty generally known, the anecdote saved the piece: it was found to be amusing, and they began to think that rational comedy was preferable to low farce.



Having found this piece printed at Bologna, and sadly disfigured, I consented to give it a place in my theatre, and this I did the more willingly as my Don Juan, if it was not exactly the new description of comedy which I proposed to myself, was also far from being of the description which I had rejected.

The actors of Saint Samuel were to pass the spring this year at Genoa, and the summer at Florence; and as there were six new actors in the company, Imer deemed my presence necessary, and proposed that I should accompany him.

I had thus an excellent opportunity of seeing two of the most beautiful cities of Italy, and all my expenses were to be defrayed.—I spoke to my mother, who always approved of my reasons, and I set out for Genoa with the director.

Our journey was pleasant, we had always favourable weather.—In crossing the high mountain called La Boquere we were slightly incommoded by the heat of the sun, and not in the least by the cold of the season.

After passing through the very rich and delightful village of San Pietro d'Arena, we discovered Genoa in the direction of the sea.—What a charming and surprising spectacle!—It is a semicircular amphitheatre, which on the one hand forms the vast basin of the port, and gradually rises on the other along the declivity of the mountain with immense buildings, which at a dis-

tance seem placed above one another, and are terminated by terraces, balustrades, or gardens, which serve for roofs to the different habitations.

In front of these, rows of palaces, hotels, and houses of citizens, some coated with marble, and others ornamented with painting, the two moles which form the mouth of the port, are to be seen; a work worthy of the Romans, as the Genoese, notwithstanding the violence and depth of the sea, have overcome nature, which seemed to oppose their establishment.

We alighted near the light-house, and entered by the gate of Saint Thomas.—We saw the immense Doria palace, where three sovereigns were lodged at the same time, and we then went straight to the inn of Saint Martha till we got the lodgings which were to be procured for us.

The lottery was drawing that day, and I had a great desire to see that ceremony.—The lottery, called in Italy *il lotto di Genova*, and at Paris *la loterie royale de France*, was not then established at Venice.—There were however persons who disposed of tickets underhand for the lottery of Genoa, and I had one of these tickets in my pocket, which I brought from home with me.

The lottery was invented at Genoa, and the first idea of it was suggested by chance.—The Genoese draw twice every year by lot, the names of five senators to supply the places of those who go out of office.—The names of all those who are in the

urn, and who may be drawn, are known at Genoa.—Individuals of the town began by betting among themselves: one said, "I bet that such a one will come out at next drawing;" another said, "I bet that a different person will be drawn;" and the wager was equal.

Some time afterwards, banks for and against were opened by artful persons, who gave an advantage to those who put into them—This came to the ears of government, and the small banks were prohibited; but the farmers who offered for them were listened to.—In this manner the lottery was established for two drawings, and some time afterwards the number was augmented.

The lottery is now almost universal, and I shall not presume to say whether it is deserving of praise or blame: I speak of every thing without deciding any thing; and endeavouring to view things in as favourable light as possible, it appears to me that the lottery of Genoa furnishes a good revenue for the government, an occupation for the idle, and a hope for the wretched and unfortunate.

For my part I was quite delighted with the lottery on this occasion; for I gained a prize of a hundred pistoles, with which I was very well satisfied.

But at Genoa a piece of good fortune of still greater value happened to me, which shed its blissful influence over all the rest of my life: for I there

married a prudent, kind and charming young woman who indemnified me for all the tricks played me by other women, and reconciled me to the fair sex. Yes, my dear reader, I became a husband, and I will tell you how.

The director and myself were lodged in a house belonging to the theatre. I had observed, opposite the windows of my room, a young woman who appeared to me rather pretty, and with whom I wished to form an acquaintance. One day when she was alone at her window, I saluted her somewhat tenderly; she bowed and instantly withdrew, and did not make her appearance again.

This excited my curiosity, and irritated my self-love. I endeavoured to learn who lived opposite my apartments. The house belonged to M. Conio, a notary of the college of Genoa, and one of the four notaries deputed to the bank of St. George; a respectable man, possessed of property, but who, having a very numerous family, was not in such easy circumstances as he ought to have been.

So far good: I was desirous of forming an acquaintance with M. Conio; I knew that Imer had paper of that bank derived from the rents of boxes which he negociated by means of exchange brokers. I requested him to confide one of the bank bills to my care, which he very willingly did; and I went to the bank of St. George to present this bill to M. Coino, and to avail myself of that opportunity to discover his character.

I found the notary surrounded with people, and I waited till they were gone; I then went up to him, and requested him to have the goodness to pay the value of my note.

This worthy man received me with great politeness; but he told me that I had made a mistake, that the bills were not payable at the bank, but that the first exchange broker or merchant would have given me cash for them instantly. I begged to be excused; I told him that I was a stranger, and his neighbour....I had a great deal to say to him, but the hour was advanced, he requested permission to shut up his office, and told me that we should converse together in our way home.

We went out together, and he proposed taking a cup of coffee with me till dinner-time; I accepted the proposal, for in Italy we take ten cups of coffee a-day. We entered a lemonade shop, and as M. Conio had seen me with the comedians, he asked me what characters I played?

"Sir," said I, "your question does not offend me, for any other person would have made the same mistake."—I told him who I was, and what my employment was; he apologized for his mistake: he was fond of plays, and frequented the theatre where he had seen my pieces, and he was delighted as much to have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with me, as I was with him. This brought us together; he visited me, and I

visited him in turn: I had opportunities of seeing Miss Conio, who appeared every day more agreeable and deserving in my eyes. In a month's time I demanded from M. Conio his daughter in marriage.

He was in no way surprised, having perceived my inclinations, and he had no apprehension of a refusal on the part of the young woman; but, like a wise and prudent man, he requested a little time, and wrote to the Genoese Consul at Venice for information respecting my character. I could not object to this delay, and I wrote off at the same time, imparting my project to my mother, and describing my future wife to her; and I requested her to send me instantly all the certificates which are necessary on similar occasions.

In a month's time I received my mother's consent and the requisite papers; and a few days afterwards M. Conio also received the most flattering accounts of me. Our marriage was fixed for the month of July, the portion agreed on, and the contract signed.

Imer knew nothing of all this; I had grounds for apprehending that he would endeavour to frustrate my project. He was in reality very much chagrined at it, as he was obliged to pass the summer at Florence, and I could not accompany him.

I promised, however, that I would not quit the company; that I should labour for the season at Venice, and return in good time; and I kept my word.

I was now the most contented and happy man in the world; but was it possible for me to experience happiness without some misfortune afterwards? I was seized with a fever on my marriage-night, and I experienced a second attack of the small-pox, which I had had at Rimini in my early youth.

Fortunately for me, I was not dangerously ill, and my features were not impaired. My poor wife shed many a tear over my pillow; she was then, and has always since been, my chief consolation.

At length my wife and myself set out for Venice in the beginning of September. Oh, heavens! What tears were shed! What a cruel separation for my wife! She quitted all at once father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts.....But she went with her husband.

On arriving at Venice with my wife, I introduced her to my mother and aunt. My mother was enchanted with the mildness of her daughter-in-law, and my aunt, who was not in easy circumstances, made a friend and confident of her niece. It was a charming family: all was peace and harmony; and I was the happiest man in the world.

My comedians, who had renouncad all hopes of me, were glad to see me again, more especially as I brought them a new piece; Rinaldo di Montalbano, a tragi-comedy, in five acts and in verse.

This subject was derived from the stock of the Italian theatre, and as bad as the old Belisarius

and Don Juan. I purified it from the gross faults which rendered it insufferable, and brought it as near as possible to the style of the ancient chivalry, and the decency and decorum requisite in a piece where Charlemagne made his appearance.

The public, accustomed to see Rinaldo Paladin of France appear in the council of war wrapped up in a torn cloak, and Harlequin defend his master's castle and put to flight the emperor's soldiers with kettles and broken pots, were pleased to observe the calumniated hero maintain his cause with dignity, and were not discontented with the suppression of the misplaced buffoonery.

Rinaldo di Montalbano was received with applause, but less favourably than Belisarius and Don Juan. It finished the autumn season; but I did not destine it for the press, and I was sorry to see it printed in the Turin edition.

I was so much occupied with various things in the first year of my marriage, that I had no time for the theatre. Something however was requisite for winter; I had planned a tragedy at Genoa; I was at the fourth act; I composed the fifth with great expedition; I made the necessary changes and corrections with much haste, and enabled the actors to give this piece in the beginning of the Carnival.

I gave my piece the title of "Henry King of Sicily." I took the subject from the novel of Gil Blas; and it is the same with that of *Blanche et*

Guiscard by M. Saurin, of the French Academy. The tragedy of the French author was not more successful than mine. It must be owned, that some subjects are so unfortunate as to set success at defiance.

Rinaldo was again taken up, and indemnified the actors; and with it we closed the theatre for the season.

Several changes took place in the company during Lent, which brought it as near the point of perfection as possible.

We changed *La Bastona* the mother for *La Bastona* the daughter, an excellent actress, full of intelligence, noble in serious parts, and very agreeable in comic. Vitalba, the principal actor, was succeeded by Simonetti, who was not so brilliant as his predecessor, but more decorous, intelligent, and docile. We made an acquisition of Golinetti for a pantaloon, who was but indifferent with his mask, but admirable in the character of young Venetians without one; and we gained also Lombardi, who both in figure and talents was unrivalled in the part of the doctor. Passalacqua was dismissed, to my great joy; I bore her no grudge; but I was in better health when I no longer saw her.

What rendered the company perfect, was the acquisition of Sacchi, the famous harlequin, whose wife was tolerable in the part of secondary lovers, and whose sister, though a little extravagant in her

action, performed very well in the character of waiting-maid.

"I am now," said I to myself; "perfectly at my ease, and I can give loose to my imagination. Hitherto I have laboured on old subjects, but now I must create and invent for myself. I have the advantage of very promising actors; but in order to employ them usefully, I must begin with studying them. Every person has his peculiar character from nature; if the author gives him a part to represent in unison with his own, he may lay his account with success. Well then," continued I; "this is perhaps the happy moment to set on foot the reform which I have so long meditated. Yes, I must treat subjects of character: this is the source of good comedy; with this the great Moliere began his career, and he carried it to a degree of perfection which the ancients merely indicated to us, and which the moderns have never seen equalled."

Was I wrong in encouraging myself in this manner? No: for my inclinations were fixed on comedy; and good comedy was the proper aim for me. I should have been wrong, had I entertained the ambition of equalling the masters of the art; but I merely aspired to reform the abuses of the theatre of my country, and this required no great extent of learning to accomplish.

Agreeably with this mode of reasoning, which seemed to me perfectly just, I cast my eyes round

the company for the actor best adapted to sustain a new character to advantage.

I fixed on Golinetti the pantaloon, not for the purpose of employing him in a mask which conceals the physiognomy, and prevents a sensible actor from displaying the passion which he feels in his countenance; but I admired his behaviour in the companies where I had seen and sounded him; I believed him possessed of qualifications for an excellent actor, and I was not mistaken.

I composed, therefore, a comedy of character, under the title of *Momolo Cortesan*. Momolo in Venetian is the diminutive of Girolamo (Jerome); but it is impossible to translate the adjective *cortesan* into any other language. This term cortesan is not a corruption of the word courtier *(courtisan)*, but is rather derived from courtesy and courteous. The Italians themselves are not generally acquainted with the Venetian cortesan: hence when I committed this piece to the press, I called it, *L'Uomo di Mondo*; and were I to translate it into French, I should be induced to give it the title of *The accomplished Man*.

Let us see whether I am mistaken. The true Venetian cortesan is serviceable, officious, and possessed of probity. He is generous without profusion; gay without rashness; fond of women without involving himself; fond of pleasure without ruining himself: he is prepared to bear a part in every thing for the good of society; he prefers

tranquillity, but will not allow himself to be duped; he is affable to all, a warm friend and a zealous protector. Is not this an accomplished man?

I shall be asked, whether there are many of these *cortesans* at Venice? Yes; a tolerable number. There are people possessed of these qualities in a greater or less degree; but when we are to exhibit the character to the public, we must always display it in all its perfection.

That any character may be productive of effect on the stage, it has always appeared to me necessary to contrast it with characters of an opposite description. In this piece I introduced a rascally Venetian, who deceives strangers; and my *cortesan*, without being acquainted with the persons imposed on, secures them from the deceit, and unmasks the knave. Harlequin is not a stupid servant in this play; he is an idle fellow who insists on his sister supporting his vices; the cortesan procures an establishment for the girl, and subjects the lazy fellow to the necessity of working for his bread. In short, this accomplished man finishes his brilliant career by marriage, and chooses among the women of his acquaintance the one with the least pretensions and the greatest share of merit.

This piece was wonderfully successful, and I was satisfied. I saw my countrymen renouncing their old relish for farces; I saw the announced reform, but I could not yet boast of it. The piece was not reduced to dialogue; and the only part written out was that of the principal actor. All the rest

was outline; I had endeavoured to suit the actors; but they were not all equally qualified to fill the void with skill. There was not that equality of style which characterizes the production of one author; I could not reform every thing at once, without stirring up against me all the admirers of the national comedy, and I waited for a favourable moment to attack them boldly with greater vigour and greater safety.

My comedians were to play on the main land during the spring and summer; they were desirous of my following them; but I told them, in the language of scripture, *uxorem duxi!* I have taken a wife.

Another reason confirmed me in my resolution of remaining at Venice. The proprietor of the theatre where my comedies were acted in autumn and winter, employed me to write a musical drama for the fair of the Ascension of that year. I composed this piece during Lent, and I was desirous of being present at the execution.

It was to be set to music by the celebrated Galuppi, who went by the name of *Buranello;* but recollecting, before delivering it to him, that I was mistaken in my Amalasonte, and being uncertain whether I had succeeded in observing all the extravagancies which are called rules in the musical drama, I wished it to be seen and examined before submitting it to the public, and I made choice of Apostolo Zeno, who had then returned from Vien-

na, where he was succeeded by Metastasio, as my judge and adviser.

These two illustrious authors effected the reformation of the Italian opera. Before them, nothing but gods, devils, machines, and wonders were to be found in these harmonious entertainments. Zeno was the first who conceived the possibility of representing tragedy in lyrical verse, without degradation, and of singing it without producing weakness. He executed the project in a manner the most satisfactory for the public, and the most glorious for himself and his nation.

In his operas, we see heroes, such as they actually were, or at least such as they have been handed down to us by historians; his characters are vigorously supported; his plans always well conducted; his episodes are necessarily connected with the main action; and his style is masculine and vigorous, and the words of the airs adapted to the music of his day.

Metastasio, who succeeded him, brought lyrical tragedy to the utmost perfection of which it was susceptible; his style is pure and elegant; his verses flowing and harmonious; an admirable precision and clearness prevail throughout his sentiments, and this precision is concealed under the veil of an apparent facility; he displays the most affecting energy in the language of the passions; his portraits, his groupes, his rich descriptions, his mild morality, his insinuating philosophy, his analysis of the human heart, the profusion and

skilful application of his knowledge; his airs, or rather his incomparable madrigals, sometimes in the manner of Pindar, and sometimes in that of Anacreon, have all rendered him the subject of most deserved admiration, and entitled him to the immortal crown conferred on him by the Italians, and acquiesced in by other nations.

Were I to venture on comparisons, I should say that, in his style, Metastasio has imitated Racine, and that Zeno imitated the vigour of Corneille. Their genius resembled their characters. Metastasio was mild, polished, and agreeable in company. Zeno was serious, profound, and instructive.

To the latter then I made my application, to analyse my Gustavus.

I found this respectable author in his closet; he received me in a very polite manner, and listened to my drama from beginning to end without uttering a single word. I could discern, however, from the expression of his countenance, the good and faulty passages of my work. "This is good;" said he, taking me by the hand; "it will do very well for the fair of the Ascension."

I understood his meaning, and I was proceeding to tear my drama to pieces; but he prevented me, and told me by way of consolation, that my opera, however indifferent, was a hundred times better than those which their authors, under the pretext of imitation, only copied from others. He durst not mention himself; but I knew the plagiarisms of which he had good grounds for complaint.

I profited by the mute corrections of M. Zeno; I made a few changes in those places at which my judge gnashed his teeth; my opera was given; the actors were good, the music excellent, and the ballets very gay; nothing was said of the drama; I kept behind my curtain; I shared in the applause to which I had no claim; and I said, by way of quieting myself, this is not my fort; I shall have my revenge in my first comedy.

The work which I had in readiness for the return of my comedians, was *il Prodigo* (the Prodigal).

The subject of this piece was not selected by me from the class of the vicious, but from that of the ridiculous. My Prodigal was neither a gamester, a debauchee, nor magnificent. His prodigality was merely weakness; he gave, for the sole pleasure of giving; his heart at bottom was excellent; but his simplicity and credulity exposed him to embarrassment and derision.

This was a new character; I knew the originals; I had seen and studied them on the banks of the Brenta, among the inhabitants of those magnificent and delightful country houses, where opulence shines forth and mediocrity is ruined.

The excellent actor who had supported so well the brilliant character of the Venetian *Cortesan*, succeeded admirably in representing the slowness and apathy of character of my Prodigal.

I gave this rich and liberal individual a knavish and dexterous steward, who availed himself of the disposition of his master, and furnished him with

occasions and means for satisfying it. Whenever money was wanted, this easy individual always ended with saying to the traitor who seduced him: "*caro vecchio fe vu ;*" that is to say, "I rely on you, my friend, do the best you can."

Certain persons in whose mouths this phrase was familiar, were recognized, and attempts were made to discover the original. I selected him from the crowd of rich individuals who are the dupes of their weakness, and their seducers; but an anecdote which I invented, happened, unfortunately for me, to correspond with an occurrence in real life, and nearly ruined me.

My Prodigal has a young woman for mistress, who would have become his wife, but for the decayed state of his affairs. The lady with her relations is on a visit at his house on the Brenta. The lover offers her a valuable ring, which the lady refuses. Some time afterwards, the attorney of the Prodigal arrives from Venice with the news that he has gained his law-suit. The generous man is desirous of shewing his joy and gratitude, and having no money, he gives the ring to the attorney, which he accepts and then returns home.

In the mean time, the lady having been advised to accept the trinket, lest the young spendthrift should dispose of it in an improper manner, returns and mentions the ring, and excuses her former refusal; she could not receive it without permission; that permission she had now obtained.....Alas!

the ring is no longer in his possession; the lover is inconsolable, the Prodigal in despair! What trouble and embarrassment!

This is one of those fortunate situations which amuse the spectators, which produce revolutions, and which bring the action naturally to a close.

It was said that this adventure had actually happened to an individual of high rank, to whom I lay under considerable obligations. Fortunately, this lord did not discover the circumstance, or affected not to perceive it. He was interested in my success; my piece succeeded; and he was as well pleased with it as myself.

My Prodigal had twenty successive representations, when it came first out; it was equally fortunate when resumed during the Carnival; but the characters in masks complained that I did not give them enough to do, and that I was on the point of ruining them. They had their amateurs and protectors disposed to defend their cause.

In consequence of their complaints, and agreeably to the plan laid down by me, in the beginning of the comic year I gave a comedy of intrigue, intituled, the Thirty-two Misfortunes of Harlequin. The execution of this fell to Sacchi at Venice; and I was certain of its success.

This actor, known on the Italian stage by the name of Truffaldin, added to the natural graces of his action, a thorough acquaintance with the art of comedy and the different European theatres.

Antonio Sacchi possessed a lively and brilliant imagination; he played in comedies of intrigue; but while other harlequins merely repeated themselves, Sacchi, who always adhered to the essence of the play, contrived to give an air of freshness to the piece, by his new sallies and unexpected repartees. It was Sacchi alone whom the people crowded to see.

His comic traits, and his jests, were neither taken from the language of the lower orders nor that of the comedians. He levied contributions on comic authors, on poets, orators, and philosophers; and in his impromptus we could recognize the thoughts of Seneca, Cicero, or Montaigne; but he possessed the art of appropriating the maxims of these great men to himself, and allying them to the simplicity of the blockhead; and the same proposition which was admired in a serious author, became highly ridiculous in the mouth of this excellent actor.

I speak of Sacchi as of a man no longer in existence; for, on account of his great age, there remains only to Italy the regret of having lost him without the hope of ever possessing his equal.

My piece, supported by the actor above-mentioned, was as successful as such a comedy could be. The amateurs of masks and outlines were satisfied with me. They found more propriety and common-sense in my Thirty-two Misfortunes, than in the comedies of art.

I observed that what gave the greatest pleasure in my piece was the accumulation of events upon one another. I availed myself of this discovery, and gave, fifteen days afterwards, a second comedy of the same kind, still more crowded with business and events, as I called it the Critical Night; or, the Hundred and Four Events in the same Night.

This piece might be called the touchstone of the comedians, for it was laboured with such complication and ingenuity, that none but the actors to whom I entrusted it could have executed it with the same accuracy and facility.

I experienced the truth of this four years afterwards. I was then at Pisa in Tuscany. A strolling company thought proper, by way of paying court to me, to act this piece. Next day, in a coffee-house on the quay of the Arno, I heard a person say: *Dio mi guardi da mal di denti e da cento e quattro accidenti.* "God keep me from the tooth-ache and the hundred and four accidents."

This proves that the reputation of an author frequently depends on the execution of the actors. He ought not to lose sight of that truth. We require the assistance of one another, and we ought to entertain for one another reciprocal love and esteem, *servatis servandis.*

CHAP. XV.

Change in my Situation—Orontes, King of Scythia, an Opera—Disagreeable Discovery in my new Employment—Difficult Commission happily terminated—Imputations disproved—Suspension of my Modena Revenues—My Brother's Arrival from Venice—Change in the Company of St. Samuel—Portrait of the Waiting-Maid—La Donna di Garbo, the Admirable Woman, a Comedy of Character, in Three Acts in Prose, and my first Play entirely written out—Preparations for my Journey—My Brother's Pretensions—Letter from Genoa—Death of La Baccherini—New Commission at Venice—Statira, a Serious Opera—Unlucky Present from my Brother—Tricks of a pretended Captain—My Disaster—My Departure from Venice.

I HAD satisfied the barbarous taste of my countrymen, and laughed in my sleeve at their compliments; and I burned with the desire of carrying the reform completely through. But an event took place this year, which interrupted for several months the course of my favorite occupation.

Count Tuo, the Genoese consul at Venice, having died, the relations of my wife, who were in the enjoyment of credit and influence, demanded the place for me, and soon carried it.

I was now in the bosom of my country, honoured with the confidence of a foreign republic; and it

required some time to become acquainted with an employment of which I was altogether ignorant. The only Genoese minister at Venice was their consul. I was therefore charged with every thing. I wrote off dispatches every eight days; I communicated news, and set up for politician. This trade I learned at Milan, and I had not yet forgotten it. My accounts, reflections, and conjectures, were relished at Genoa, and I was by no means on bad terms with the diplomatic body at Venice.

My new situation and my new occupations did not prevent me from resuming the thread of my theatrical pursuits; and in the Carnival of the same year, I gave an opera to the theatre of St. John Chrysostom, and a comedy of character to that of St. Samuel.

My opera, the title of which was, Orontes King of Scythia, had a very brilliant success. The music of Buranello was divine; the decorations of Jolli superb; the actors excellent; not a word was said of the book; but the author of the words did on that account the less enjoy the good fortune of this charming spectacle.

But at the theatre, when a new piece of mine, called the Bankruptcy, was acted at the same time, all the applauses, all the clappings of hands and bravos were for me.

A fraudulent bankrupt is a criminal who, in abusing the confidence of the public, dishonours

himself, ruins his family, robs and betrays individuals, and does an injury to the commercial world at large.

Initiated by my new employment in the knowledge of mercantile affairs, I heard of nothing but failures; and I observed that all those who withdrew, made their escape, or allowed themselves to be taken, owed their ruin to ambition, debauchery, and misconduct; and acting upon the maxim of comedy, *ridendo castigat mores;* I imagined that the theatre might be converted into a lyceum for the prevention of abuses, and the consequences resulting from them.

I did not confine myself in my piece to bankrupts, but exhibited at the same time all those who contributed the most to their failure; and I did not forget the lawyers, who, by throwing dust in the eyes of the creditors, afford fraudulent bankrupts time to render their failures more lucrative and safe.

I am not certain whether my piece effected any reformation; but I know well, that it was generally applauded, and that the merchants, whom I had reason to dread, were the first to testify their satisfaction, some from motives of sincerity, and others from policy.

The Bankruptcy was acted without intermission during all the rest of the Carnival; and with it we closed the comic year 1740.

In this piece there were far greater numbers of

written scenes than in the two preceding ones. I proceeded quietly in making my advances towards the liberty of writing my pieces entirely out; and notwithstanding the impediments of masks, I soon accomplished my wish.

I was now full of honours and joy; but you know, my dear reader, that my happy days have never been of long duration.

When the consulate of Genoa was offered to me, I accepted it with gratitude and respect, without demanding what were the emoluments of the office. This was another of my follies, for which I paid dearly.

I thought of nothing at first but rendering myself worthy of the good-will of the republic, with whose confidence I was honoured. I took lodgings in which I could receive foreign ministers in a suitable manner. I encreased my domestic establishment, my table, and my retinue. I thought I could not with propriety act otherwise.

In writing after the lapse of some time to the Secretary of State, with whom I corresponded, I mentioned the article of my salary; and I received for my consolation from the secretary an answer nearly in the following terms:

"Count Tuo (my predecessor), served the republic for nearly twenty years without any emolument: the senate were satisfied with me; the government considered it proper that I should be recompensed, but the Corsican war rendered the re-

public unable to defray an expense which for so long a time it had ceased to provide for."

What sad news for me! The profits of the consulate did not amount to a hundred crowns *per annum*.—I wished to throw up my situation instantly; but by the following courier I received a letter from a Genoese senator, confiding an intricate commission to my care, and encouraging me to remain in office.

A person entrusted with the affairs of the Republic of Genoa, and who held in a foreign court the commission of the Senate, and full powers from the public creditors, had abused the confidence of the Genoese, escaped with considerable sums of money, and been living for several days quietly at Venice.

The senator sent me letters of credit for Santin Cambiasio the banker, and a power to obtain the body or a seizure of the goods of his debtor.

The commission was delicate, and the execution promised to be attended with difficulty.—I knew my country however; in a government where there are almost as many primary tribunals as matters subject to contestation, if the affair be good, there are means of obtaining justice without violating the delicacy of the law of nations.

I was listened to, and well served: my client was indemnified, and the money and effects passed through my hands into those of M. Cambiasio, to be disposed of by the Genoese patrician.

This affair, which was well conducted and happily terminated, did me infinite honour; but my unlucky star was not long in overwhelming me with its influence.

In the inventory of the effects recovered by me, there were two boxes of gold enriched with diamonds—I was entrusted with the sale of them—I confided them to a broker: this rascal pledged them with a Jew, left the duplicates, and made his escape.—I was the responsible person, and it was requisite to pay for their recovery. M. Cambiasio supplied me with money on account of the senator, and my father-in-law paid it back again at Genoa out of the remainder of his daughter's portion which he still owed me.

All these facts were amply proved at Genoa and Venice, and the allegations made against me were amply disproved.

Still however I continued to be harassed and teased on the subject by men of business, who bore me a grudge ever since my play of The Bankruptcy.

Imer, the director of the theatre of Saint Samuel, had been constituted the attorney of M. Berio, a Genoese, his brother-in-law, to draw from the mint of Venice the sum of fifteen hundred ducats.

Imer, who was empowered to name other attornies in his stead, made choice of me.—I drew the money, and sent six hundred and twenty du-

cats to M. M. Berio by the channel of M. M. Lembro and Simon Maruzzi, bankers, whose receipt I still preserve, and I gave the remainder of the sum to M. Imer, from whom I received a discharge in form.

I was accused of having misappropriated this last sum.—I had no difficulty in proving the contrary; but the assertions and writings of that time may be still revived after my death, and I have an interest in preserving my defence and justification in these memoirs.

I have a nephew who bears my name; and if I have no other property to leave him, let him at least enjoy the reputation of that uncle who acted as a father towards him, and bestowed upon him the education of which he has made so good a use.

I was by no means therefore in easy circumstances in the beginning of the year 1740; and to add to my misfortune, I was all at once deprived of the best part of my rents.

The war between the French and Spaniards on the one hand, and the Austrians on the other began to break out.—It was called the war of Don Philip; and Lombardy was inundated with foreign troops to instal that prince in the possession of Parma and Placentia.

The Duke of Modena joined his forces to those of the Bourbons.—He was generalissimo of their

army: and, to support the expenses of the war, he stopped the payment of the annuities of the ducal bank called *Luoghi di Monte.*

This void in my domestic affairs threw me into great consternation.—I could no longer mantain my rank in society.

I formed the resolution of setting out instantly for Modena in quest of money at all hazards, and to pass on to Genoa, and demand justice.—I wrote in consequence to the republic, and demonstrated the necessity of a journey, I demanded permission to appoint a substitute in my place, and I waited for the consent of the senate.

In this expectation, and in the midst of my chagrins and embarrassments, my brother arrived from Modena, as much dissatisfied as myself with the suspension of our annuities, and still more piqued at not having been included in the new promotion made by his Royal Highness in his troops.—He had quitted the service altogether, and came to enjoy his tranquillity at my expense.

On the other hand, I was teased for works by the comedians.—This was my only consolation; but Sacchi had left us, and the half of his comrades had followed him.—Golinetti the Pantaloon was no longer with us, and the most essential actors were all new to me.

I sought out the individual amongst them most capable of interesting me, and my predilection for

waiting-maids, induced me to fix on Madame Baccherini, who succeeded the sister of Sacchi in that character.

She was a young Florentine, extremely pretty, very gay, and very brilliant, with a plump and round figure, white skin, dark eyes, a great deal of vivacity, and a charming pronunciation. She had not the skill and experience of the actress who preceded her, but she was possessed of a most happy aptitude for improvement, and she required nothing but study and time to arrive at perfection.

Madame Baccherini was married as well as myself. We became friends; we were necessary to each other; I contributed to her glory, and she dissipated my chagrin.

It was an established custom amongst the Italian actors, for the waiting-maids to give several times every year pieces which were called transformations, as the Hobgoblin, the Female Magician, and others of the same description, in which the actress appearing under different forms was obliged to change her dress frequently, to act different characters and speak various languages.

Of the forty or fifty waiting-maids whom I could name, not two of them were bearable.—The characters were false, the costumes caricatured, the languages indistinct, and the whole illusion destroyed.—What else was to be expected? for to enable a woman to support in an agreeable manner such a number of changes she must be under the

real operation of the charm which is supposed in the piece.

My beautiful Florentine was dying of eagerness to display her pretty countenance in different dresses. I corrected her folly at the same time that I endeavoured to gratify it.

I invented a comedy, in which, without change of language or dress, she could support different characters; an affair which is not very difficult for a woman, and especially a clever woman.

The title of this piece was *La Donna di Garbo*, the Admirable Woman. It afforded great pleasure in the reading; Madame Baccherini was enchanted with it, but the theatres at Venice were on the point of closing. The company were to pass the spring at Genoa, and it was to be acted there for the first time. I proposed to appear there also at the first representation, but I became all of a sudden the sport of fortune. Events of a singular nature overturned my projects, and I did not witness the representation of my piece till four years afterwards.

On the removal of the comedians I felt myself lonely; for in my then disagreeable situation every company wearied me.

I thought only of my journey: my mother and my aunt stood in no need of my assistance; my wife was to follow me, and my brother alone was burdensome to us all.

He entertained the highest idea of himself: I

was of a different opinion, and he was offended at my way of thinking.

For example; he did not hesitate to ask me to popose him to supply my place during my absence from Venice, or to send him to Genoa to solicit the salary of my office; but I did not believe him cut out for either of these commissions, and I went on as usual, till I should receive letters from Genoa, in the execution of my project.

The letters arrived, the permission was granted, my substitute was approved of, and I was satisfied. I resolved therefore to go to Modena to demand payment of my annuities; to go to Genoa to solicit payment of my salary; to be present at the representation of the *Donna di Garbo*, as La Baccherini would perhaps reqnire my assistance, and at any rate would be very glad to see me. The charms of this delightful actress added to my eagerness; I feasted myself with the idea of seeing her perform this important part in my piece.

But, O Heavens! the brother of Madam Baccherini was still at Venice. He waited on me; I saw him in tears; he could not pronounce a single word; he put a letter from Genoa into my hands, containing an account of the death of his sister.

What a blow for me! It was not the lover who bewailed his mistress, but the author who mourned for his favourite actress. My wife, who observed my chagrin, was reasonable enough to leave me to myself.

After this event, I still adhered to my project, but I was not so eager to set out, and I even endeavoured to put off my departure.

A society of noble Venetians had taken a lease of the theatre of St. John Chrysostom for five years, and demanded an opera from me for the fair of the Ascension. At first I refused to satisfy them; but on becoming master of my time, I accepted of the commission, and finished in a few days an opera entitled Statira, which I had in my portfolio.

I was present at the rehearsals and the representation of this drama, and I drew the profits of authorship and received an extraordinary recompense from these generous undertakers.

I had reason to be satisfied with this prolongation of my stay in Venice; but I paid very dear for it in the sequel, and I was indebted to my brother for the cruel embarrassment in which I was placed.

He entered my house one day at two o'clock in the afternoon, and pushed open with his cane the folding doors of my study. His hat was drawn over his brow, his countenance was red, his eyes sparkling,—I knew not whether from joy or rage. Looking hard at me with a disdainful air, "Brother," said he, "you will not always treat me as lightly as you do now."—"What do you mean, brother?"—"I do not compose verses, but every one has his value—I have made a discovery."—"If it can be of any use to you, I shall be exceedingly glad."—

"Yes, useful and honourable for me, and still more useful and honourable for you."—"For me!"—"Yes: I have made an acquaintance with a Ragusan captain, a man....a man who has not his fellow. He keeps up a correspondence with the principal courts of Europe; he has commissions at which you would tremble; he is employed to raise recruits for a new regiment of two thousand Sclavonians; but, O heavens! if the government of Venice were to discover this, we should be ruined....Brother....brother....I have disclosed the matter, you know the importance of discretion."

I wished to suggest a few reflections to him.—"Listen to me," said he, interrupting me; "there is a captaincy here open for me; I have served in Dalmatia, as you know; this my friend also knows; he knew my uncle Visinoni at Zara, and he destines a company for me. But for you," continued he, "it is quite another affair."—"For me? what the devil does he want with me?"—"He knows you by reputation, he esteems you, you will be the auditor, the grand judge of the regiment."—"I?"—"Yes, you."

At that moment the servant entered, and announced to us that dinner was ready. "The deuce take both you and the dinner!" said my brother; "we have business to transact; leave us undisturbed."—"But cannot you defer it," said I, "till after dinner?"—"Not at all: it must wait."—

"Why?"—"The captain is coming."—"So you have asked him?"—"Yes; are you displeased that I have taken the liberty to invite a friend?"—"The captain is your friend then?"—"I have no doubt of it."—"You have just formed acquaintance with him, and he is your friend already?"—"We soldiers are not courtiers; we know one another at first sight; honour and glory form the bond of our union, and next moment we become friends."

My wife arrived, and intreated us to be done. "Good heavens! Madam," cried my brother, "this is being very impatient."—"It is your mother," said she, "who is growing impatient."—"My mother, my mother....let her dine and go to bed."—"All this, my brother, smells sadly of gunpowder."—"I am sorry, I am sorry; but the captain cannot be long."—A knock was heard; it was the captain; a number of compliments and excuses passed, and we sat down to dinner.

This man had more the appearance of a courtier than a soldier. He was supple, mild, affected, his complexion was wan, his face long, his nose aquiline, and his eyes small, round, and greenish. He was very gallant, very attentive to the ladies, holding grave discourses to the old women, and saying pleasant things to the young, yet none of his little stories seemed to take off his attention from his dinner. We took our coffee at table; my brother put me in mind of the remainder

of my stock of wine for the sake of entertaining his friend, and the Ragusan, my brother and myself went to shut ourselves up in my study.

As the recommendation of my brother did not give me the most favourable idea of this unknown person, and as he did not want for address or foresight, he recounted to me in a very rapid and elegant preamble, his name, his country, his condition, his titles, his exploits, and concluded with shewing me the letters-patent, written in the Italian language, in which he was empowered to raise two thousand men of the Illyrian nation for a new regiment in the service of the power from whom he held the commission.

In these letters, the Ragusan was appointed colonel of the regiment, with the power of naming officers, judge, quarter-masters, &c. and they contained the signatures of the sovereign minister and secretary of state of the war department with the seal of the crown.

I was not any great judge of these foreign signatures, and I was distrustful of a man whom I only saw for the first time, and till I should be enabled to verify their authenticity, I ventured to put a few questions to the captain, who did not fail to give me satisfactory answers.

I first asked him by what accident my brother and myself were so fortunate as to interest him in our favour?

"Your brother," said he, "is a man who may

be of utility to my interests. He is acquainted with Dalmatia and Albania, where he has served, and these are two provinces capable of supplying excellent men for our regiment. I mean to provide him with letters and money and send him there to recruit." At this my brother clung round the Ragusan.—"You shall see, my friend, you shall see; I shall procure for you Dalmatians, Albanians, Croatians, Molachians, Turks and devils; let me alone, Gospodina, Gospodina, dobro, jutro, Gospodina.

The captain, who was himself a Sclavonian, and laughed in his sleeve perhaps at this displaced Illyrian salutation of my brother, smiled, and turning towards me: "For you, sir," said he, "I do myself an honour in requesting you to accept the office of auditor-general of my regiment. You are bred to the law, and your situation of consul. ....But à-propos of the place which you fill," continued he, "I have a favour to demand of you. I am at present in Venice, which is a free country; but the affair in which I am now engaged is very delicate, and might give offence to the government on account of their Dalmatian subjects; I am beset by spies; I am afraid of being taken by surprise; and if you could lodge me in your house, I should not perhaps be secure from the pursuits of the republic, but I should have time to escape them."

"Sir," said I, "My lodgings are not sufficiently

commodious."....My brother exclaimed, interrupting me, "I shall give up my room to the captain." I endeavoured to defend myself, but in vain.—Thus the Ragusan got himself established in my house.

The society of this man was agreeable enough; I allowed myself to be gained over without difficulty; and I could not bring myself to suspect him. I wished, however, to have nothing to reproach myself with. Wherever I heard persons mentioned as being concerned in the secret of the business in question, I began to make enquiries.

I called on the merchants employed for the regimental uniforms. I spoke to the officers engaged by the brevet-colonel. He received one day a bill of exchange for six thousand ducats, drawn on M. M. Pommer, Brothers, German bankers; the bill was not accepted, because they had received no letters of advice, but the signatures were exactly imitated. My belief was at length fixed, and I fell into the snare.

Three days afterwards the Ragusan entered the house in great agitation and consternation; he had to pay six thousand livres in the course of the day, and he could procure no delay; the officers of the law would be dispatched in pursuit of him; the nature of the debt would discover every thing; he was in despair, as all was ruined. I was affected by his discourse, my brother solicited me,

my heart determined me. I made what efforts I could to raise this sum; I was fortunate enough to succeed, I gave it in the course of the day to my guest, and next day the scoundrel disappeared.

I was plunged in embarrassment; my brother made enquiries after him to kill him; but he was fortunately out of danger. All those who were duped by the Ragusan, repaired to my house, and we were forced to stop their complaints to avoid the indignation of the government and the derision of the public.

What resolution could I adopt? The robber left Venice on the 15th of September, 1741, and I embarked on the 18th, with my wife for Bologna.

CHAP. XVI.

My Embarkation for Bologna—Casual Profits in that City—Bad News—Journey to Rimini—My arrival in that Town—My Presentation to the Duke of Modena—Observations on the Spanish Camp—Company of Comedians at Rimini—The World of the Moon, a Comedy—Movement of the Austrian Troops—Retreat of the Spaniards—Bad Quarters—Disagreeable News—Dangerous Undertaking—Sad Adventure—Fatiguing Journey—Unexpected good Luck—My Arrival at Rimini—Fortunate Meeting—Honourable and lucrative Commission—My Renunciation of the Genoese Consulate—Another Commission still more lucrative—March of the Germans from Rimini in pursuit of the Spaniards—My Departure for Tuscany—My Arrival in Florence—A few Words respecting that City—My Journey to Sienna—I form an Acquaintance with the Chevalier Perfetti—His extraordinary Talent—Societies of Sienna—Journey to Volterra—View of the Catacombs—Curiosities collected in that District and in that of Peccioli—My Arrival at Pisa.

Sad, thoughtful, and plunged in chagrin, I was about to pass a most disagreeable night in that courier's bark, which in former times I had found very comfortable and very amusing.

My wife, who was more reasonable than myself, instead of complaining of her situation, sought only to console me. Animated by her example and advice, I endeavoured to dispel

the regret for the past, by the hope of better fortune in future. I fell asleep, and I found myself, on waking, like a man who has been shipwrecked and who has saved himself by swimming.

On arriving at the bridge of Lago Scuro on the Po, at a league's distance from Ferrara, I took post and arrived in the evening at Bologna. I was well acquainted with that city, and well known there. The directors of the theatres called upon me; they asked me for some of my pieces; I made some difficulty, but I was in want of money; they took care to offer me some, and I was not backward in accepting it.

I confided three of my originals to them to be copied out. It was necessary to wait; I waited accordingly, and I did not lose my time.

I was asked at Venice for a comedy without females, and susceptible of military exercises, for a college of the Jesuits. The pretended captain who deceived me occurred to my mind, and furnished me with a subject. I entitled my piece, The Impostor; I employed in it all the warmth which indignation could possibly inspire; I pourtrayed my brother in vivid characters in it; I did not spare myself, and I covered my simplicity with all the ridicule which it deserved.

This little undertaking was of infinite benefit to me; it effaced from my mind the dark hues with which it was coloured by the wickedness of a knave; I deemed myself revenged.

My piece was concluded; the directors returned me my manuscripts, and I proposed setting out for Modena.

At Bologna there was an excellent actor who played pantaloon, and who being in easy circumstances, preferred enjoying himself in the fine season, and to confine his acting to winter.

This man, whose name was Ferramonti, had never quitted me during my stay at Bolonga. He had entered into an engagement with a company of comedians at Rimini, in the service of the Spanish camp, and he came to take his leave of me on setting out.

"You are going to Rimini," said I, "and I am going to Modena." "What are you going to do at Modena?" said he, "they are all in consternation there; the Duke has left the place."—"What, the Duke is not there?"—"He is engaged in a ruinous war."—"I know that; but where is he?"—"He is at Rimini, in the Spanish camp, where he will pass the winter."

This threw me into great distress. "I have lost my opportunity through my own fault; I have lost too much time."—"Come along with me to Rimini," said Ferramonti, "where you will find a tolerable company; they ought to know and esteem you. Come with me, you shall do something for us, and we will do every thing for you."

The proposition did not displease me; but I wished to consult my wife. She was a Genoese;

we were on the road to her relations; but, poor child! she was goodness and complacency personified. Whatever her husband proposed was approved of by her. Content to see me tranquil and satisfied, she encouraged me to follow my new project, and we set out three days afterwards with the good old Venetian.

On arriving within sight of the ramparts of Rimini, we were stopped at the first advanced post and escorted to the main guard. There the comedian was set at liberty, on declaring who he was, and my wife and myself were sent to the court of Modena. I knew several persons of all ranks attached to his highness: I was well received and even caressed. A lodging was procured for me, and next day I was presented to that prince, who received me with kindness, and asked me the motive which induced me to visit Rimini.

I was not long in telling him the truth; but I had no sooner pronounced the words *ducal bank* and *arrears*, than his highness turned the conversation to the theatre, my piece, and my success; and the audience terminated two minutes afterwards.

I saw that I had nothing to hope for from this quarter; I turned my views next to the comedians, where my expectations were better realized.

I was invited to dinner with the director, to whom Ferramonti had spoken a great deal about me. All the company were present; the principal

female character was an excellent actress, but very much advanced in years; the second actress was a stupid and badly educated beauty. Colombina was a fresh and attractive brunette, on the point of being brought to bed, and who by the bye soon became my companion; she was the waiting-maid, and this was the character which usually fell to my lot.

Every body asked me for pieces; every one wished to be the principal subject. To whom was I to give the preference? The Count de Grosberg extricated me from my embarrassment.

This brave officer, brigadier-general of the regiment of Walloon Guards, in the army of his Catholic Majesty, was strongly attached to the theatre. He was a particular protector of harlequin. He requested me to labour for that character, and I did so with the greatest pleasure, as the harlequin was good and the protector generous.

The harlequin, M. Bigottini, was a good actor in the parts suited to his character; but he was surprising for the changes and transformations which he went through.

M. de Grosberg recollected a piece of the old *Foire* of Paris, called Harlequin, Emperor in the Moon; and he imagined that his protegé would shine in this subject. He was in the right. I laboured this piece according to my fancy, and gave it the same title. It was highly successful; all were satisfied, and myself along with the rest.

The theatre was closed on the termination of the Carnival. M. de Gages, who acted along with the generalissimo as general-commandant, kept up the most exact order, and the most rigorous discipline throughout the whole army. There was no gaming, no balls, no women of suspicious character. Rimini resembled a convent.

The Spaniards paid their court to the ladies of the country in the Castilian manner; and the ladies were pleased to see the sons of Mars on their bended knees before them. The societies were numerously attended, but free from tumult, and gallantry shone forth without scandal.

I enjoyed, like the rest, this mild tranquillity diffused through the best houses of the town, assuming with the ladies the noble gravity and forbearance of the Spaniards, and displaying the Italian gaiety occasionally in private with my favourite actress; and I waited for the good season to set out for Genoa. But what obstacles! what revolutions! what events!

The German troops quartered in the Bologna territories, made some movements which alarmed the Spaniards. The latter were not disposed to wait the arrival of their enemy; and in proportion as the Germans advanced towards Romagna, the Spaniards retreated for the purpose of dividing their encampment between Pesaro and Fano.

All the Spaniards who were at Cesena, Cervia, and Cesenatico, came to join the main body of the

army at Rimini. I was obliged to share my apartment. But this was not all; this was nothing.

My brother, my amiable brother, arrived at the same time from Venice, with two Venetian officers, to propose to M. de Gages the raising of a new regiment, and the place of auditor was reserved for me. I had learned to become distrustful of projects, and I refused to listen to them; but I was obliged for all that to lodge and feed them.

In three days the army decamped, and my brother and his companions followed it. I remained at Rimini in a state of greater embarrassment than ever.

I was a subject of the Duke of Modena; and I was Genoese consul at Venice; and these two nations in that war took the side of the Bourbons. I had every reason to fear being considered by the Austrians as a suspicious character.

I communicated my fears to persons belonging to the country with whom I was acquainted. Every body considered them well-founded; but then how was I to act? Neither horses nor carriages were to be had. The army had carried off every thing.

I found some foreign merchants in the same predicament with myself. I entered into an arrangement with them; we agreed to go by sea, and hired a bark for Pesaro.

The weather was favourable, but there had been a storm the night before, and the sea was still in agitation. Our women suffered very much; my

wife spit blood. We anchored in Catholica Roads, the half of our projected voyage; and finished our journey by land in a peasant's-cart. We left our effects in charge of some of our domestics, who were to join us at Pesaro, and we arrived in that town fatigued and exhausted, without acquaintances and without lodgings, and yet these were the least of the evils in store for us.

All was in confusion in Pesaro, which had more people than could be contained in it. There was no room in the inns, and no furnished lodgings to be had.

Count de Grosberg was at Fano; all the officers of my acquaintance were occupied, and the persons attached to the Duke of Modena could only offer me their table. A Modenese valet, in possession of a garret, resigned his elegant apartment to me for money.

Next day I left my wife in her garret, and went to the mouth of the Foglia, to see if my goods were arrived. I found my travelling companions there on the same errand. They had passed the night still more uncomfortably than myself. No barks from Rimini: no news of our effects.

I went back to the town. Count de Grosberg had returned; he took compassion on me, and allowed me to lodge with himself. At this I was not a little rejoiced; but two hours afterwards I was plunged again into a terrible consternation.

I met one of the merchants whom I had seen

by the sea-shore; and found him in great distress and agitation. "Well, sir," said he, "no news yet?"—"Alas!" said he, "all is lost; the Austrian hussars have taken possession of Catholica; our bark, our effects, and servants, are in their hands. I have just now received a letter from my correspondent at Rimini, communicating the news." "O, Heavens! what shall we do?" said I.—"I know not," he replied; and abruptly quitted me.

I stood thunderstruck. The loss was irreparable for me; my wife and myself were very well equipped; we had three trunks, two portmanteaus, boxes, and band-boxes; and now we were left without a shirt.

Great evils require great remedies. I formed my project instantly; I thought it a good one, and proceeded to communicate it to my protector. I found him apprised of the invasion of Catholica, and acquainted with the loss of my effects. "I shall go and endeavour to recover them," said I; —"I am not a soldier, I am not attached to Spain; I require merely a conveyance for myself and wife."

Count de Grosberg admired my courage; and to get rid of us perhaps, he commenced with procuring for me the passports of the German commissary, who followed the Spanish troops for that purpose, and who gave orders to let me have a chaise.

There was no post at that time; the drivers

concealed themselves. One was at length discovered, and they forced him to take me. He was kept all night in M. de Grosberg's stables, and I set out early next morning.

I have not spoken of my wife since this last accident, for the sake of not tiring my reader's patience, but the situation of a woman who loses all at once her jewels, dress, and every thing belonging to her, may be easily imagined. However, she was of a thoroughly good and reasonable temper, and readily accompanied me on my journey.

The driver, a fair speaking, but crafty fellow, came for us when he was ready, and exhibited not the slightest mark of discontent; and we set out after taking some breakfast, quite tranquil and gay.

The distance from Pesaro to Catholica was ten miles; we had gone three of them, when my wife was under the necessity of alighting. I ordered the driver to stop; we got down, and went on two or three steps towards an old ruin. The rascal turned the horses immediately, set off at a gallop for Pesaro, and left us in the middle of the highway without either resource, or the slightest hope of finding any.

Not a living soul was to be seen. Not a peasant in the fields, not a single inhabitant in any of the houses; every body dreaded the approach of the two armies: my wife wept, I raised my eyes towards heaven, and felt myself inspired.

"Courage," said I, "my dear friend; we are but six miles from Catholica; we are young enough and strong enough to walk that distance; we must not return—we must have nothing to reproach ourselves with."—She complied with the best grace in the world, and we continued our journey on foot.

After an hour's walk, we came to a rivulet too broad to be leaped and too deep to be forded by my wife. There was a small wooden bridge for the convenience of foot-passengers, but the planks were all broken.

This did not disconcert me: I stooped down, my wife put her arms round my neck, I rose smiling, crossed over the stream with inexpressible joy and said to myself, *omnia bona mea mecum porto*, I carry all my property upon me.

My feet and legs were wet, but it did not signify. We continued our journey, and after some time, came to another stream like that we had passed. The depth was similar, and the bridge was equally ruinous. This was no obstacle; we passed it as we did the former, and with the same gaiety.

But it was a very different matter when, close upon Catholica, we came to a torrent of considerable breadth, which rushed along with great fury. We sat down at the foot of a tree, till Providence should afford us the means of crossing it without danger.

Neither carriages, horses, nor carts were to be

seen; there was no inn in the neighbourhood; we were fatigued, we had passed this day without eating any thing, and we were therefore in want of some refreshment.

I rose for the purpose of looking about me. "This torrent," said I, "must necessarily enter the sea. If we descend its banks, we shall at last come to the mouth of it."

We proceeded accordingly down the stream, instigated by distress and supported by hope; and we began to discover sails, which were an indication of the proximity of the sea. This infused courage into us, and we quickened our pace. As we proceeded, we observed the torrent become less and less agitated, and our joy was not to be contained when at length our eyes were blessed with the sight of a boat.

It belonged to some fishermen, from whom we met with a very kind reception. They carried us over to the opposite bank and returned us a thousand thanks for a paoli which I gave them.

A second consolatory circumstance was neither less agreeable nor less necessary to us. A branch of a tree attached to a cottage, announced a place of refreshment; we procured milk and new-laid eggs, with which we were highly satisfied.

The repose and slight nourishment which we had taken enabled us to proceed on our journey. We were guided by a lad of the inn to the first advanced posts of the Austrian hussars.

I presented my passport to the serjeant, who detached two soldiers to escort us, and we arrived through fields of trodden grain, and vines and trees cut down in all directions, to the quarters of the colonel-commandant.

This officer received us at first as he would any two foot-passengers; but on reading the passport which one of the soldiers gave him, he requested us to be seated. Then looking at me with an air of goodness, he exclaimed: "What are you, M. Goldoni?"—"Alas! I am, sir."—"The author of Belisarius and of the Venetian Cortesan?"—"The same."—"And is this lady, Madam Goldoni?"—"She is my only remaining property."—"I was told that you were on foot."—"It is but too true, sir."

I then recounted to him the rascally trick which the driver of Pesaro played us; I described our sad journey to him; and concluded with mentioning the seizure of our property; assuring him that my resources and my situation in life depended altogether on my recovering them.

"Not so fast, if you please," said the commandant; "Why do you follow the army? Why are you connected with the Spaniards?"

As the truth had never yet injured me, but had always, on the contrary, been my support and my defence, I gave him a short account of my adventures. I mentioned my Genoese Consulate, my Modena annuities, my views of indemnification;

and I told him that I should be completely ruined, if I were deprived of the small remains of my wrecked fortune.

"Console yourself," said he in a friendly tone to me, "you shall not lose it."—My wife rose with tears of joy in her eyes, and I in turn wished to express my gratitude; but the colonel would not listen to me. He ordered my servant and all my property to be sent to me, but on one condition, that I might take any road but that of Pesaro. "No, certainly," said I, "your kindness, the obligations which I have"....He would not give me time to conclude; he had business, he embraced me, kissed my wife's hand, and went to shut himself up in his closet.

His valet-de-chambre accompanied us to a very comfortable inn. I offered him a sequin, which he very nobly refused, and left us.

An hour afterwards, my servant arrived in tears at seeing himself free, and us happy; our trunks had been forced open, but I had the keys. A locksmith soon put them to rights.

I hired next morning betimes a cart for my passage. My wife and myself travelled post, and we went to join our good friends at Rimini.

On arriving at the first advanced post, I was escorted to the main guard of Rimini. The captain was at table. On learning that a man who came post was in waiting, he gave orders for our entrance. The first person whom I saw on enter-

ing, was my friend and countryman M. Borsari, who was principal secretary of Prince Lobcowitz, field-marshal and general commandant of the Imperial army.

M. Borsari knew that I had passed the winter at Rimini, and that I left it with the Spaniards. I imparted to him my motive for returning, the singular particulars of my journey, and my intention of visiting Genoa.

"No," said he; "so long as we remain here, you shall not go to Genoa."—"What shall I do here?" said I.—"You shall amuse yourself."—"That is the best business, I know; but still one must be doing something."—"We shall find you something to do; we have a tolerable theatre here."—"Who are the principal actors?"—"Madam Casalini is a very good actress; Madam Bonaldi...."—"The waiting-maid you mean?"—"Yes."—"She is my friend."—"Well, I shall be glad to see her again." While M. Borsari and myself were carrying on this conversation, my wife did not feel the greatest ease in the company of the German officers, who did not prostrate themselves before the ladies like the Spaniards. She made me a sign that the conversation was becoming wearisome to her. We took our leave of the company, and Borsari did not quit us.

My servant was in waiting for me at the door, to inform me that my old lodgings were occupied. Borsari promised that I should have them again,

as he could prevail on the officer who was an acquaintance of his, to relinquish them for others. In the mean time, he acccomodated us in his own house, and gave us a room beside his own, which we gladly accepted, and occupied for three days.

Next day my friend presented me to his master. The prince had heard of me. He communicated the plan of a fête to me, and entrusted me with the management of it.

The empress-queen Maria Theresa had just then married the archduchess her sister to Prince Charles of Lorraine. Marshal Lobcowitz was desirous of displaying rejoicings at Rimini for this august marriage; he enjoined me to write a cantata; and he left the choice of the composer and the number and quality of the voices to Borsari and myself. He left us masters of every thing, and all that he recommended was order and promptitude.

There was a music-master at Rimini, named Ciccio Maggiore, by no means of the first rank of composers, but who might well pass in time of war. We made choice of him for the music, and ordered two male and two female singers from Bologna. I composed words to some old music of our composer, and in a month's time our cantata was executed in the theatre of the town, to the satisfaction of the person who proposed it, and of the foreign officers and nobility of the place.

The composer and myself were very liberally

recompensed by the German general; but the Neapolitan, who was by no means a fool, suggested beforehand a means which he had perhaps more than once put in practice for the augmentation of our profits.

We bound up a considerable number of copies of our printed cantata; and we went round in a handsome coach to present copies to all the officers of the staff of the different regiments in the town and environs. We received as the fruits of this proceeding a purse very decently filled with Venetian sequins, Spanish pistoles, and Portuguese pieces, which we divided equally between us.

In the mean time I received a letter from Genoa acquainting me that a Venetian merchant without any intention of injuring me, solicited my office of consul in case I was unwilling to retain it, and offered to do the duty without any emolument for the sake of the title, which, in his situation was of much greater advantage to him than it could be to me. The Genoese senate did not deprive me of the office, but they placed me in the predicament of either withdrawing or serving gratuitously. I adopted the first resolution, I resigned the office and never thought of it afterwards.

Besides I had suffered so much that I was glad to have an opportunity of enjoying some tranquillity for a little time. I had money, I had nothing to do, and I was happy.

Rimini presented quite a different appearance from that which it exhibited during the possession

of it by the Spaniards. There were amusements of every description; balls, concerts, public games, brilliant societies, and ladies of gallantry. Every descriptson of character, every situation in life might find entertainment of some kind or other. I was fond of my wife, I shared my pleasures with her, and she followed me every where.

The only place to which she did not accompany me was my female friend's; she did not hinder me from going; but this actress was not to her taste, and there is no disputing respecting taste.

My poor friend was at length obliged to leave the place. The German officers were desirous of an opera for the Carnival, and the actors were compelled to give up the theatre.

Count Novati, a Milanese, lieutenant-general in the armies of their royal and imperial majesties, took the charge of the new entertainment. He did me the honour to propose the direction of it to me. I accepted it with pleasure, and I had no reason to repent; for the generosity of that nobleman allowed me to derive greater profits than I had any right to expect.

Things went on with me better and better, and fortune seemed to have changed in my favour. In reality, since my last disaster of Catholica and my return to Rimini I never afterwards experienced any of those terrible blows which threatened to crush me without chance of escape.

The opera closed with the Carnival, and our

amusements were succeeded by the bustle of politics and war.

In the beginning of Lent, the Austrian field-marshal assembled together all the troops quartered in Romagna, and I enjoyed the charming sight of a general review of forty thousand men.

This was the signal for the Austrians to decamp. I bade adieu to my friend Borsari, and in forty days there was not a single German in the country which is now called Romagna, and which in the times of the emperors was called the Exarchate of Ravenna.

I was also desirous of leaving the place. The journey to Genoa was now useless; I was free, and the master of my inclinations; I possessed a sufficiency of money, and I was induced to carry into execution a project which I had long entertained.

I wished to visit Tuscany; to go over it and reside there for some time. I required to get familiarized with the Florentines and Siennese, who are the living texts of the pure Italian language. I imparted this wish to my wife; I pointed out to her that this journey brought us nearer to Genoa; she appeared satisfied, and we determined on setting out for Florence.

The new road from Bologna to Florence was not yet opened in 1742. At present the journey may be performed in one day; but it required then two at least to cross those high mountains with which Tuscany is walled in.

Being precluded from avoiding a bad road, I chose the shortest; and I entrusted my effects to a mule-driver.

My wife and myself took post to Castrecarro; from thence we crossed the Alps of Saint Benedict on horseback, and we arrived at length in that fine territory to which we owe the revival of letters.

I will not enlarge on the beauty and attractions of the city of Florence; all writers and travellers do justice to it. Elegant streets, magnificent palaces, delightful gardens, superb walks, numerous societies, literature generally cultivated, multitudes of curiosities, the arts patronised, talents held in estimation, a flourishing agriculture, a rich soil, an important commerce, a rich river running through the town, a considerable sea-port in its dependencies, handsome men and beautiful women, gaiety, wit, strangers from all nations, amusements of every description....it is a charming country.

I passed four most delightful months in this city, where I formed several very interesting acquaintances: that of the Senator Ruscellai, auditor of the jurisdiction; Doctor Cocchi, a systematical physician and an agreeable philosopher; the Abbé Gorri, an enlightened antiquary, well versed in the Etruscan language; the Abbé Lami, author of a literary journal, the best work of the kind ever seen in Italy.

It was my intention to pass the summer in

Florence and the autumn in Sienna; but the desire which I entertained of seeing and hearing the Chevalier Perfetti, determined me to set out in the beginning of the month of August.

Perfetti was one of those poets only to be met with in Italy, who compose and deliver verses extempore; but he was so superior to every other person, and added such science and elegance to the facility of his versification, that he gained the honour of being crowned in the capitol of Rome; an honour which had never been conferred on any since the days of Petrarc.

This celebrated man was very aged; he was seldom to be seen in company, and still less in public.—I was told that he was to make his appearance on Assumption-day at the academy of the *Intronati* of Sienna.—I set out instantly with my faithful mate; and we were admitted as strangers to a place in the academy—Perfetti was seated in a sort of pulpit; one of the academicians addressed him; and as he could not wander from the subject of the festival for which the academy was met, he proposed for argument the rejoicings of the angels on the approach of the immaculate body of the Virgin.

The poet sung for a quarter of an hour strophes in the manner of Pindar, and nothing could be more surprising; he was by turns a Petrarc, a Milton, and a Rousseau; he was Pindar himself.—I was glad that I had heard him, and I paid him a

visit next day.—My acquaintance with him procured me a number of others.—The society of Sienna was delightful.—There was not a gaming party which was not preceded by a literary conversation; every one read their own compositions, or those of others, and the ladies participated in this as well as the men.—Such at least was the case in my time; I know not whether gallantry may not have there since gained an exclusive preference as well as in the rest of Italy.

Desirous of examining Tuscany, on leaving Sienna, I proceeded through the marshy country called *Le Maremme*, a vast and formerly unproductive district, the greater part of which has been brought under cultivation by the Marquis Ginori of Florence, who has established a porcelain manufactory in it.—I ascended thence to the town of Volterra, one of the old republics of Tuscany, which is built on the summit of a very high and steep mountain.

This district, which is seldom visited by travellers, is interesting from its situation, and the remains of the monuments of the Etruscans, and of the Pagan religion are to be found there.

I crawled into the catacombs, which I examined by the light of torches of yellow wax; and I discovered there the whole extent of my cowardice.—The two guides who walked before me, held consultations respecting the places which we were to go over in this subterranean abode: "Do not go

that way," said the one, " for the roof fell in a short time ago :"—" Let us go this way then," said the other ; " But if the roof of the vault should fall in here also," said I, trembling, to my two guides .... " O that does not frequently happen," they said.—I got out at length, thank God ; and I promised to myself never to return.

What did I see ? Nothing ; I was the dupe of my curiosity, but I did what a number of other people had done before me.

What I saw with more pleasure, and without danger, was the heaps of sea-shells on these high mountains, which, at the summit are at least half a league in elevation above the level of the Mediterranean.—This was the first time I ever saw such an incontestible proof of great revolutions in nature, the origin of which is still uncertain, and the mechanism of which has not yet been discovered.

I carried away with me blocks of conglomerated shells, and also very finely worked pieces of Volterra alabaster, quite transparent and very soft.

I added to my new wealth small tunnels executed by insects to whom they serve for a shelter in winter, and which are only to be found in the district of Peccioli, then traversed by me ; and at night-fall I reached the gates of Pisa, where I procured lodgings at the post inn.

CHAP. XVII.

A few Words respecting the City of Pisa—My Adventure in the Colony of the Arcadi—My new Employment—My Success—My Amusements—My Reception among the Arcadi of Rome—My Comedy of Harlequin's Child lost and found—Interesting Cause at Pisa—Another Cause at Florence—My Journey to Lucca—Extraordinary Music—Charming Opera—Delightful Road—My Return to Pisa—Arrival of my Brother-in-law from Genoa—His Departure with my Wife for that Place—Dislike to my new Employment—My Zeal is converted into Coolness—Singular Conversation with an Actor—New Piece composed at his Request—My Journey to Leghorn.

PISA is a very interesting country.—The Arno which runs through the town is more navigable than at Florence, and the canal between that river and the port of Leghorn is productive of considerable advantage to the state.

At Pisa there is a university which is as old and as well frequented as those of Pavia, Padua, or Bologna.

The order of Knights of Saint Stephen, founded in 1562, by Cosmo de' Medici, holds its general chapter every third year in that city.

The baths of Pisa are very healthful, the air of the city and its environs is reputed the best in Italy,

and the water there is as pure, light, and easy of passage, as that of Nocera.

I intended to stay only a few days at Pisa, and I remained three years there. I settled in the place without wishing it, and entered into engagements without considering what I was about. My comic genius was not extinguished but suppressed. Thalia, piqued at my desertion, dispatched emissaries from time to time to bring me again to her standards. I yielded at length to the gentle violence of an agreeable seduction, and I quitted a second time the temple of Themis for that of Apollo.

I shall use my utmost endeavours to comprise in a few words the transactions of a period of three years which alone would require a volume.

I amused myself in examining the remarkable curiosities of Pisa the first day after my arrival: —the cathedral, which is rich in statues and paintings, the singular steeple which outwardly seems to incline very much to one side, and which appears straight in the inside; the church-yard surrounded with a superb portico, and containing earth impregnated with alkali or calcareous salts, which reduces dead bodies to ashes in twenty-four hours. But I began to be wearied, for I knew nobody.

Walking one day near the castle, I observed a number of coaches round a gate-way, and people entering. On looking in, I saw a vast court with a garden at the end of it, and a number of persons seated under a sort of arbour.

I approached nearer; I observed a man in livery, who had the air and manners of a man of importance. I asked to whom the place belonged, and why such a number of people were then assembled?

This very polite and intelligent valet was not long in satisfying my curiosity.—"The assembly which you see," said he, "is a colony of the *Arcadi* of Rome, called *la Colonia Alfea*, the Colony of Alpheus, a very celebrated river in Greece, which flowed through the ancient Pisa in Elis."

I enquired whether I could be present at the meeting?—"By all means," said the porter; who accompanied me himself to the entrance of the garden, and then presented me to one of the valets of the academy, by whom I was seated in the circle. I listened attentively, and heard productions of every description. I applauded the bad as well as the good.

Every body looked at me, and seemed curious to know who I was; I was seized with a desire to satisfy them. The man who procured me the place, was not far from my chair. I called him, and desired him to ask the person who presided in the assembly, whether a stranger might be permitted to express in verse the satisfaction which he had experienced? The president announced my demand to the assembly, who readily gave their consent.

I had a sonnet in my head, composed by me in my youth, under similar circumstances; I hastily changed a few words to adapt it to the occasion: I delivered my fourteen verses with the tone and inflection of voice which set off sentiment and rhiming to the greatest advantage. The sonnet had all the appearance of being extemporaneous, and was very much applauded. I know not whether the sitting was to have been longer protracted, but all the assembly rose and flocked round me.

Here was a circle of acquaintances formed at once; a number of societies to choose from. That of M. Fabri was the most useful and agreeable for me. He was Chancellor of the Jurisdiction of the Order of Saint Stephen, and he presided over the Assembly of the *Arcadi* under the pastoral title of Guardian.

I saw all the Arcadian shepherds who were that day assembled in succession: I dined with some and supped with others. The Pisans are very kind and obliging to strangers, and they conceived a great friendship and consideration for me. I announced myself as a Venetian Advocate; I told them part of my adventures; they saw that I was a man without employment, but capable of it; they proposed to me to resume the gown which I had quitted, and they promised me clients and books. Any foreign licentiate may practice at the bar of Pisa; and I undertook boldly to plead as a civil and criminal advocate.

The Pisans were every way as good as their word, and I was fortunate enough to satisfy them. I laboured night and day; I had more causes than I could undertake; I found out the secret of diminishing the burden to the satisfaction of my clients; I demonstrated to them the folly of litigation, and endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation with adverse parties. They paid me for my consultations and we were all of us satisfied.

Whilst my affairs were going on prosperously, and my closet was in such a flourishing state as to inspire my brethren with jealousy, the devil, I believe, sent a company of comedians to Pisa. I could not abstain from seeing them, and I was seized with a strong desire to give them something of mine. They were too indifferent actors for me to think of confiding a comedy of character to them; but I abandoned to them my outline of a comedy called the *Hundred and Four Accidents in one Night*, and it was on this occasion I experienced the disagreeable circumstances mentioned in a former part of these memoirs.

Mortified at the failure of my piece, I resolved never more to go near the comedians, or to think of comedy. I redoubled my legal assiduity and I gained three law suits the same month.

I also derived infinite honour from a criminal defence. A young man of family had robbed his neighbour. A door had been forced and the young man was on the point of being condemned to the galleys.

The family was respectable, he was an only son, his sisters were unmarried, all these circumstances stimulated me to endeavour to save him.

After satisfying the party complaining, I caused the lock of his apartments to be changed, so that the key of the other party could open it. The young man had taken one floor for another, he had opened the door by mistake: and seeing the money spread out, the opportunity had tempted him.

I began my memorial with the seventh verse of the twenty-fifth Psalm: *Delicta juventutis meæ et ignorantias meas ne memineris, Domine;* Remember not the sins of my youth nor my transgressions, O Lord. I strengthened my pleading with classical quotations, decisions of the Roman law and of the Criminal Chamber of Florence, called *Il Magistrato degli Otto,* the Tribunal of Eight. I employed both reasoning and pathos; he was not a criminal inured to crimes who endeavoured to palliate his guilt, but a rash and inconsiderate young man who owned his fault, and only asked forgiveness for the sake of the honour of a respectable father and two interesting young women of quality who were fit for marriage.

My youthful robber was at length condemned to remain in prison for three months; the family were very well satisfied with me, and the criminal judge was pleased to compliment me on the occasion

This attached me more and more to a profession which was at once productive of both honour and pleasure, and a very reasonable profit.

In the midst of my labours and occupations I received a letter from Venice which threw all my blood and spirits into commotion. It was a letter from Sacchi.

This comedian had returned to Italy; he knew I was at Pisa; he asked me for a comedy; he even sent me the subject of one, which he left me at freedom to work on as I pleased.

What a temptation for me! Sacchi was an excellent actor; comedy had been my passion; I felt my old taste, my old fire and enthusiasm reviving within me. The subject proposed was the Valet of two Masters; and I easily saw what might be made of it with such an actor as Sacchi. I was therefore devoured with a desire of trying my hand again ..... I knew not what to do..... law-suits and clients crowded on me.....but my poor Sacchi ..... but the servant with two masters ..... well for this time ..... but I cannot ..... yes I can ..... At length I wrote in answer that I would undertake it.

I laboured by day for the bar, and by night at my play ..... I finished the piece, and sent it to Venice. Nobody knew the circumstance; my wife only was in the secret; and she suffered as much as myself. Alas! I passed the nights.....

While I worked at my piece my doors were

closed at night-fall, and I did not pass my evenings in the coffee-house of the *Arcadi*.

The first time I made my appearance there I was reproached for my neglect, and I excused myself on account of my increase of business. These gentlemen were very glad to see me employed; but still they were unwilling that I should forget the delightful amusement of poetry.

M. Fabri arrived, and was delighted to see me. He drew a large packet from his pocket, and presented me with two diplomas which he had procured for me: the one was my charter of aggregation to the *Arcadi* of Rome, under the name of *Polisseno*; the other gave me the investiture of the Fegean fields. I was on this saluted by the whole assembly in chorus under the name of Polisseno Fegeio, and embraced by them as a fellow-shepherd and brother.

The Arcadians are very rich, as you may perceive, my dear reader; we possess estates in Greece; we water them with our labours for the sake of reaping branches of laurels; and the Turks sow them with grain and plant them with vines, and laugh at both our titles and our songs.

Notwithstanding my occupations, I still composed sonnets, odes, and other pieces of lyrical poetry from time to time for the sittings of our academy.

But however much the Pisans might be satis-

fied with me, I was not satisfied myself. I must do myself justice, I have never been a good poet. In point of invention perhaps I have not been defective, and the theatre is a proof of it; for my genius took that turn.

Some time afterwards Sacchi communicated to me the success of my piece. The Servant of Two Masters was applauded and drew immense crowds, and he sent me a present which I did not expect; but he demanded another piece still, the subject of which he left entirely to me. He wished, however, as my last comedy had a comic foundation, that this should have an interesting fable for basis, susceptible of sentiment and all the pathos compatible with a comedy.

This was the language of a man; I knew him well; I was very desirous of satisfying him, and his mode of acting engaged me still more to him; but then my closet....this kept my mind on the rack again. At my last piece I had said only this once. I had three days to answer him in. During these three days, walking, dining, or sleeping, I thought of nothing but Sacchi; and I was obliged to get this object out of my head to be good for any thing else.

I composed on this occasion the piece known in France as well as Italy under the title of "Harlequin's Child lost and found." The success of this trifle was astonishing; it was the means of

bringing me to Paris, and was therefore a fortunate piece for me: but it shall never see the light as long as I live, nor even have a place in my Italian theatre.

I composed it at a time when my mind was agitated. It contained interesting situations; but I had not sufficient time to prepare them with that precision by which good works are characterized. There were diamonds perhaps in it, but then they were set in copper; some of the scenes appeared evidently the work of an author, but the piece as a whole seemed the production of a scholar. I own that the winding up of the plot might pass for a model if the comedy taken altogether were not disfigured by essential faults. Its principal defect is the want of probability throughout. I have always judged it without prepossession and I have never allowed myself to be seduced by the applause lavished on it.

When my piece was finished, I read it attentively over, and perceived all the beauties which might render it agreeable, and all the defects with which it abounded. I sent it however to its place of destination.

Italy had just begun to relish the first attempts at the reform projected by me. There still were numbers of partisans of the old comedy, and I was certain that mine which did not wander much from the ordinary and beaten track would afford pleasure and even surprise from the mixture of

comic and pathetic scenes which I had artfully introduced.

I afterwards learnt the brilliant success which it met with, and I was not astonished; but what was my surprise, on arriving in France, to find that this piece drew crowds, and was applauded and even extolled to the skies in the Italian theatre of Paris!

It must be owned that we enter theatres with very different ideas and prejudices; and the Frenchmen applaud in the Italian theatre what they would condemn in that of their own nation.

After sending the son of Harlequin to M. Sacchi, who was to father it, I resumed my daily occupations. I had several causes to dispatch, and I began with that which appeared to me most interesting.

The client whose cause I was engaged in, was only a peasant; but the peasants of Tuscany are in easy circumstances, always at law, and pay well.

They have almost all of them leases of their possessions to themselves, their children, and grand-children. They give a suitable sum on entering into possession, and pay an annual quit-rent. They consider these possessions as their own property, they are attached to them, they improve them carefully, and at the end of the lease the proprietor derives the advantage.

My client had to do with the prior of a convent, who wished the lease annulled on the

ground that monks are always minors, and that the land might be let to greater advantage. I discovered the hidden spring of all this. It was a young widow, who, under the protection of the reverend father, wished to dispossess the countryman.

I composed a memorial, which interested the nation, and in which I proved the importance of preserving leases for lives from infringement. I gained my cause, and derived infinite honour from my pleading.

I was obliged some days afterwards to go to Florence to solicit an order from the government for shutting up a lady in a convent till the termination of the cause then commenced.

She was of age and a rich heiress, and had signed a contract of marriage with a Florentine gentleman who held a commission in the Tuscan army, and she was desirous of marrying a young man more to her liking.

While my client and myself were in the capital, the young lady contrived to manage matters with her new favourite in such a way as to elude our proceedings. The law-suit assumed another appearance, and threatened to become serious. We listened to propositions, the lady was rich, and the affair was amicably arranged.

On returning from Florence, I was obliged to go to Lucca in another suit. I was glad to have an opportunity of seeing that republic, which is

neither extensive nor powerful, but which is rich, agreeable, and very wisely governed.

I took my wife along with me, and we passed six days there in the most agreeable manner in the world. It was the beginning of May. The day of the invention of the Holy Cross is the principal festival of this town. In the cathedral there is an image of our Saviour, called *Il volto Santo*, which is exposed that day with the most brilliant pomp, and such a number of voices and musical instruments as I have never seen equalled either at Venice or Rome.

A devout native of Lucca bequeathed a sum of money for receiving in the cathedral on that day every musician who comes forward, and to pay them not according to their talents, but the distance from which they come, and the recompense is fixed at so much per league or mile.

This music may be easily conceived to have been more noisy than agreeable; but the opera which was represented in Lucca at the same time was admirable in point of selection and composition. The charming Gabrielli was the delight of all who attended this harmonious spectacle. She was then good-humoured; the celebrated Guadagni, who was her hero on the stage and in private, had subjected the caprices of this syren to the empire of love. He made her sing every day, and the public, accustomed to see her look sickly,

disgusted herself and disgusting to others, felt the greater pleasure in the full enjoyment of her sweet voice and superior talents.

When my business was over, and my curiosity gratified, I quitted with regret that charming country, which, under the protection of the emperor, *pro tempore*, enjoys the most tranquil liberty, and possesses the most salutary and exact police.

I was glad to see and shew to my wife another very interesting part of Tuscany. We proceeded through the territories of Pescia, Pistoia, and Prato.

It is impossible to see hills with a better exposure, estates better cultivated, or more luxuriant and delightful fields. If Italy be the garden of Europe, Tuscany is the garden of Italy.

A few days after my return to Pisa, my wife's eldest brother arrived at Genoa; he was sent by his parents to claim performance of my engagement to visit them.

I had been twice absent on business, and I could not suffer myself to be absent a third time, merely on pleasure. My wife said nothing, but I knew the desire which she had to see her family, and I foresaw the chagrin of my brother-in-law, if he had been obliged to return home alone. I arranged matters to the satisfaction of all three: my wife accompanied her brother to Genoa, and I remained by myself peaceably occupied with the business of my closet.

I had causes in every tribunal, clients in every rank of life, the first-rate nobility, the richest citizens, merchants of the highest credit, parish priests, monks, rich farmers, and even one of my brethren, who, being implicated in a criminal action, made choice of me for his defender.

Thus the whole town was on my side; at least any body would have supposed so, as I myself most certainly did believe it: but I soon perceived that I was grossly mistaken. Through friendship and consideration I had become naturalized in the hearts of individuals; but I was still a stranger when these same individuals met in a body.

At this time an old advocate of Pisa departed this life, who, according to the custom of the country, was nominated the defender of several religious bodies, of corporations and different houses in the town, all which brought in to him in corn, oil, and money, a very respectable sum, which defrayed the expenses of housekeeping.

At his death, I asked for all these vacant places, that I might obtain some of them; but they were all given to Pisans, and the Venetian was excluded.

I was told by way of consolation, that I had only been two years and a half at Pisa; that my adversaries had, for four years at least, been taking steps for succeeding the deceased; that engagements had been entered into on the subject; and that the very first opportunity I should be satisfied.

All this might be very true; but it was singular, that, out of twenty places, I could not procure one. This event threw me into ill-humour, and indisposed me to such a degree, that I no longer looked on my employment in any other light than as a casual and precarious mode of subsistence.

One day, as I was busied in reflections of this nature, a stranger, desirous of speaking to me, was announced. I observed a man nearly six feet high and broad in proportion, crossing the hall, with a cane in his hand, and a round hat, in the English fashion.

He entered with measured step into my closet. I rose. He made a picturesque gesticulation by way of preventing me from putting myself under any constraint. He advanced, and I requested him to be seated. Our conversation began in this way:

"Sir," said he, "I have not the honour of being known to you; but you must be acquainted with my father and uncle at Venice. I am your humble servant Darbes."—"What! M. Darbes? the son of the director of the post of Friuli; the boy who was supposed lost, who was so much sought after, and so much regretted?"—"Yes, sir, that very same prodigal, who has never yet prostrated himself before his father."—"Why do you defer affording him that consolation?"—"My family, my relations, my country, shall never see me, till I

are able, and I know you will not refuse me."—"I am occupied with business, and cannot gratify you."—"I respect your occupations; you will compose the piece at your leisure, when you feel inclined."

He laid hold of my box while we were talking, took snuff from it, slipped into it several golden ducats, shut it again, and threw it down on the table with one of those gesticulations which indicate a wish to conceal what one would be very glad to have discovered. I opened my box and refused to accept the money.—"Do not be displeased I earnestly beg of you," said he; "this is merely to account of the paper." I wished to return the money; this gave rise to various postures and bows; he rose, withdrew, gained the door and disappeared.

What was to be done in such a case? I adopted, I think, the best resolution the affair admitted of. I wrote to Darbes, that he might rely on the piece which he had demanded from me; and I requested to be informed whether he wished it for a pantaloon in a mask, or without one.

Darbes soon answered me; he could not throw any gesticulations or contortions into his letter, but it was singular in its way.

"I am to have then, (said he,) a comedy from Goldoni. It will be the lance and buckler, with which I shall challenge all the theatres of the world..... How fortunate I am!....I betted a hundred ducats with our manager, that I should obtain a piece

from Goldoni; if I gain the bet, the manager must pay, and the piece is mine.....I am young, and not yet sufficiently known; but I will challenge Rubini, the pantaloon of St. Luke, and Corrini, the pantaloon of St. Samuel in Venice; I will attack Ferramonti at Bologna, Pasini at Milan, Bellotti, known by the name of Tiziani, in Tuscany, and even Golinetti in his retreat, and Garelli in his grave."

He concluded by telling me that he wished his character to be that of a young man without a mask, and he pointed out as a model an old comedy of art, called *Pantalon Paroncin*.

This word *Paroncin*, both in the literal translation and the character, corresponds exactly with the French word *petit-maître*; for *Paron*, in the Venetian dialect, is the same as *Patrone* in Tuscan, and *maître* in French; and *paroncin* is the diminutive of *paron*, as *petit-maître* is the diminutive of *maître*.

In my time, the Venetian paroncini played the same part at Venice as the petit-maîtres at Paris; but every thing changes.

There are now none in France, and perhaps they exist no more in Italy.

I composed a piece for Darbes under the title of *Tonin Belia Gratia*; which may be translated, *The elegant Antonio*.

I finished my work in three weeks, and carried it myself to Leghorn, a town with which I was well acquainted, being but four leagues from Pisa,

and where I had friends, clients, and correspondents. Darbes, to whom I sent notice of my arrival, called upon me at the inn where I lodged; I read over my piece to him; he appeared very well satisfied with it, and with many ceremonies, bows, and broken words, he very gallantly gave me the bet which he had gained, and, to avoid my thanking him, ran out instantly, under the pretext of communicating the piece to the manager.

I shall give an account of this work when I come to speak of its being acted at Venice; for at present I must entertain my reader with something much more interesting.

CHAP. XVIII.

Visit of M. Medebac—He obliges me to dine with him—Portrait of Madam Medebac—I see my Comedy of La Donna di Garbo, for the first Time—Description of that Piece—Medebac engages me—My Adieu to Pisa—My Departure—My Adieu to Florence—Le Sibillone, a Literary Amusement—My Departure from Tuscany, and my Regret—Crossing the Appenines—I pass through Bologna and Ferrara—My Inconveniences and Departure for Modena—Arrangement of my Affairs with the Ducal Bank—My Journey to Venice.

AFTER my conversation with Darbes, I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock. I could not, at such a late hour, break in on any of my friends, and I gave orders to have something brought me from the kitchen of my inn.

As they were covering the table, M. Medebac was announced. On entering, he overpowered me with politeness, and invited me to dine with him. The soups were already on my table, and I thanked him. Darbes, who accompanied the manager, took my hat and cane, and presented them to me. Medebac insisted on his part; Darbes laid hold of my left arm and the other by the right; they locked me between them, dragged me along, and I was forced to accompany them.

On entering the manager's, Madam Medebac came to receive us at the door of her anti-chamber. This actress, as estimable on account of her propriety of conduct as her talents, was young and handsome. She received me in the most respectful and gracious manner. We sat down to a very respectable family-dinner, which was served up with the utmost order and neatness.

They had advertised for that day a comedy of art; but, by way of compliment to me, they changed the bills, and gave out Griselda; adding, a tragedy by M. Goldoni. Although this piece was not altogether mine, my self-love was flattered, and I went to see it in the box destined for me.

I was extremely well pleased with Madam Medebac, who played the part of Griselda. Her natural gentleness, her pathetic voice, her intelligence, her action, rendered her altogether an interesting object in my eyes, and raised her as an actress above all whom I had ever known.

But I was much more delighted next day, for they acted the *Donna di Garbo*, the Admirable Woman, which had hitherto been my favourite comedy.

I composed this piece at Venice, for Madam Baccherini, who was to appear in it at Genoa. The actress died before acting in it, and my journey to Genoa was prevented from taking place. It was the first time therefore that I had an oppor-

tunity of seeing the *Donna di Garbo*. What a pleasure for me to see it so well represented!

I complimented Madam Medebac and her husband. This man, who was acquainted with my works, and to whom I had confided the mortifications experienced by me at Pisa, made a very interesting proposal to me a few days afterwards. I must mention it to my reader; for it was in consequence of this proposal of Medebac, that I renounced the profession followed by me for three years, and that I resumed my old occupation.

"If you are determined on quitting Tuscany," said Medebac one day to me; "if you mean to return to the bosoms of your countrymen, your relations, and friends, I have a project to propose to you, which will at least prove to you the value which I set on your person and talents. There are two play-houses at Venice," continued he; "I engage to direct a third, and to take a lease of it for five or six years, if you will do me the honour of labouring for me."

The proposition appeared to me flattering; and it required no great offer to turn the scale in favour of comedy. I thanked the manager for the confidence he reposed in me; I accepted the proposition; we made an agreement, and the contract was instantly drawn up.

I did not sign it at that moment, for I wished to communicate it to my wife, who had not yet

returned. I knew her docility, but I owed her my esteem and friendship. When she arrived, she approved of it, and I sent my signature to Leghorn.

My muse and pen were thus again at the disposal of an individual. A French author will, perhaps, think this a singular engagement. A man of letters, it will be said, ought to be free, and to despise servitude and constraint.

If this author be in easy circumstances like Voltaire, or cynical like Rousseau, I have nothing to say to him; but if he be one of those who have no objection to share in the profits derived from the sale of their works, I beseech him to have the goodness to listen to my justification.

The highest price of admission to the theatre in Italy does not exceed the sum of a Roman paoli, ten French sous.

All those, it is true, who go to the boxes, pay the same sum in entering; but the boxes belong to the proprietor of the theatre, and the receipts cannot be considerable; so that the author's share is hardly worth the looking after.

Men of talents in France have another resource; gratifications from the court, pensions, and royal presents. But there is nothing of this kind whatever in Italy; and hence the description of people the best qualified perhaps for mental excellence, remains sunk in lethargy and idleness.

I have sometimes been tempted to look upon myself as a phenomenon. I abandoned myself,

without reflection, to the comic impulse by which I was stimulated; I have, on three or four occasions, lost the most favourable opportunities for improving my situation, and always relapsed into my old propensity; but the thought of this does not disturb me; for though in any other situation, I might perhaps have been in easier circumstances, I should never have been so happy.

I was very well pleased with my new situation, and my agreement with Medebac. My pieces were to be received without any power of rejection, and to be paid for without waiting the result. One representation was the same to me as fifty; and if I bestowed more attention and zeal in the composition of my works to ensure their success, I was stimulated solely by the love of glory and honour.

I connected myself with Medebac in the month of September 1746, and I was to join him at Mantua in the month of April in the following year. I had thus six months time to arrange my affairs at Pisa, to dispatch the causes in hand, to give up others which I could not retain, to take leave of my judges and clients, and to bid a poetical adieu to the academy of the Arcadi. I discharged every duty, and set out after Easter.

Before quitting Tuscany, I was anxious once more to pay a visit to the city of Florence, the capital.

In taking leave of my acquaintances, it was proposed to me to visit the academy of the *Apatisti*. It was not unknown to me; but I wished to

see that day the *Sibillone*, a sort of literary amusement which takes place from time to time, and which I had never yet seen.

The *sibillone*, or great sybill, is a child of only ten or twelve years of age, who is placed on a tribune in the middle of the assembly. Any one of the persons present puts a question to the young sybill; the child must pronounce some word on the occasion, which becomes the oracle of the prophetess, and the answer to the proposed question.

These answers of a boy, without time for reflection, are in general destitute of common sense; but an academician beside the tribune, rises up, and maintains that the sibillone has returned a very proper answer, and undertakes to give an immediate interpretation of the oracle.

That the reader may have some idea of the Italian imagination and boldness, I shall give some account of the question, the answer, and the interpretation the day when I was present.

A person who, like myself, was a stranger, asked the sybill to inform him why women weep with greater ease and more frequently than men? The only answer which the sybill returned was *straw*; and the interpreter, addressing the author of the question, maintained that nothing could be more decisive or satisfactory than the oracle.

This learned academician, who was a tall and lusty abbé of about forty, with a sonorous and agreeable voice, spoke for nearly three quarter's of an hour. He went into an analysis of dif-

ferent slender plants, and proved that straw surpassed them all in fragility; he passed from straw to women; and in a manner equally rapid and luminous, entered into an anatomical view of the human body. He explained the source of tears in the two sexes. He proved the delicacy of fibres in the one, and the resistance in the other. He concluded with a piece of flattery to the ladies who were present, in assigning the prerogatives of sensibility to weakness, and took care to avoid saying any thing of their having tears at command.

I own that this man surprised me. It was impossible to display more erudition and precision in a matter which did not seem susceptible of it. These are tricks, I am willing to admit, something in the taste of the master-piece of an unknown author *(chef d'œuvre d'un inconnu)*; but it is not the less true that such talents are rare and estimable, and that they only want encouragement to rise to a level with many others, and carry those who possess them down to posterity.

On returning to my lodgings the same day, I found a letter from Pisa, informing me that my trunks were at the custom-house of Florence. I sent them off next day for Bologna, and prepared to follow them immediately.

From the gate of the city, which I quitted with regret, to Capagiuolo, a country-house belonging to the grand Duke, fourteen miles from the capital, I enjoyed the view of the delightful exposure and

industrious cultivation of the Tuscan soil; but as soon as I began to climb the Appenines, I perceived an astonishing change in the soil, climate, and whole appearance of nature. I scrambled over the three high mountains of *Giogo*, *Uccellatoio*, and *Raticosa*, which appeared more rugged and dismal from the contrast with the country I had quitted, and I wished heartily that the Florentines and Bolognese could fall upon some means of smoothing the difficulties of this abrupt road, which renders the communication between these two interesting countries so fatiguing and wearisome. My wishes were obtained some time afterwards.

On arriving at Bologna, my wife and myself required some repose. We saw nobody; and in twenty-four hours we resumed our journey, and arrived at Mantua towards the end of April.

Medebac, who impatiently expected me, received me with joy, and procured me lodgings with Madam Balletti.....She was an old actress who, under the name of Fravolletta, had excelled in the characters of waiting-maids. She had left the stage, and was in easy circumstances, and, at the age of eighty-five, still possessed remains of beauty and an attractive wit.

She was mother-in-law to Miss Silvia, the delight of the Italian theatre at Paris, and mother-in-law to M. Balletti, who distinguished himself in Venice as a dancer, and afterwards in France as an actor.

I passed a month at Mantua very uncomfortably, and almost always confined to bed. The air

of that marshy country did not agree with me. I gave the manager two new comedies composed by me for him. He appeared satisfied with them, and allowed me to go to Modena, where he was to pass the summer. I was wise in leaving Mantua, for I felt relieved on reaching the second station, and I arrived at Modena in perfect health.

The war was now over. The Infant Don Philip was in possession of the duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla. The Duke of Modena had returned to his dominions; the Ducal Bank proposed an arrangement with the annuitants; and I was glad to have an opportunity of attending myself to my own interests.

Towards the end of July, Medebac and his company arrived at Modena, where I gave him a third piece; but I kept my novelties for Venice.

I had there laid the foundation of an Italian theatre, and it was there I intended to labour in the construction of that new edifice. I had no rivals to contend with, but I had prejudices to overcome.

If my reader has had the complaisance to follow me thus far, the matter which I have now to offer to his attention will engage him perhaps to continue his kindness towards me.

My style will be always the same, without elegance and without pretension, but animated by zeal for my art, and inspired by a love of truth.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

MEMOIRS OF GOLDONI.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAP. XIX.

My Return to Venice—Medebac takes a Lease of the Theatre of St. Angelo—The elegant Antonio, The prudent Man, The Venetian Twins, Comedies of Character, of three Acts, and in prose—Their Success—Criticism of my Comedies—Insulting Pamphlets against the Comedians—Their History and Defence—The Cunning Widow, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—The respectable Girl, a Venetian Comedy of three Acts, in prose—Its Success—Criticisms, Disputes; different Opinions respectiug my new Comedies—My Way of Thinking on the Subject of Unity of Place—Explanation of the Utility of the Word Protagonist*—A few Words respecting the Comedies which the French call Dramas—The good Wife, Sequel to the respectable Girl, a Venetian Comedy of three Acts, and in prose—Its Success—Anecdote of a young Man who was converted—Reflections on popular Subjects—The Gentleman and the Lady, a Comedy in three Acts, and in prose —Its Success.*

WHAT a satisfaction for me to return at the end of five years to my country, which had always been dear to me, and which improved in my eyes after every absence!

After my last departure from Venice, my mother took apartments for herself and sister in the court of St. George, in the neighbourhood of St. Mark. The quarter was beautiful, and the situation tolerable; and I joined my dear mother, who always caressed me, and never complained of me.

She questioned me respecting my brother, and I made similar enquiries of her; neither of us knew what had become of him. My mother believed him dead, and shed tears; but I knew him somewhat better, and was certain that he would one day return to be a burden to me. In this I was not deceived.

Medebac had taken the theatre of Saint Angelo, which was not over large, was less fatiguing to the actors, and contained a sufficient number of people to produce adequate receipts.

I have forgotten the piece which was represented at the opening of the theatre. I only know, that the company, being strangers, had to struggle with very able rivals, and had the greatest difficulty in obtaining protectors and partisans.

The first thing which began to give some credit to our theatre was *Griselda*. This interesting tragedy, and the talents of the actress, by whom it was even improved, produced a general sensation in the public mind in favour of Madam Medebac; and the *Donna di Garbo*, which was given out some days afterwards, completely established its reputation.

Darbes, who acted the Venetian characters, had always been well received and even applauded hitherto in them; but he had never yet played without a mask, and the absence of this was precisely what was most calculated to set him off to advantage.

He durst not act in the characters composed by me for *Golinetti* in the theatre of *Saint Samuel*. In this respect I thought him quite right; for first impressions are not easily effaced, and comparisons ought, as far as possible, carefully to be avoided.

Darbes could only therefore appear in the Venetian piece which I had composed for him. I was afraid that the elegant Antonio would not equal the *Cortesan Veneziano*, but we could only make a trial.

We began to put it in rehearsal. The actors were quite overcome with laughter, and I laughed heartily myself. We thought the public would follow our example; but the public, which is said to have no opinion of its own, was quite firm and decided against this piece at its first representation, and I was obliged instantly to withdraw it.

In similar circumstances I have never been disgusted either with the spectators or actors, but have always begun coolly to examine myself. I saw this time, that I was clearly in the wrong.

This unfortunate comedy is in print. So much the worse for me and for those who take the trouble of reading it. I shall only observe in atonement for my fault, that when I wrote this comedy, I had

been four years out of practice; my head was occupied with my professional employment, I was uneasy in mind, and in bad humour, and, to add to my misfortune, it was approved of by my actors. We were sharers in the folly, and we were equal sharers in the loss.

Poor Darbes was very much mortified, and it became necessary to console him. I instantly began a new piece of the same sort, and in the mean time I made him appear with his mask in a new comedy which did him great honour, and was eminently successful. This was the *Prudent Man*, a piece in three acts and in prose.

This comedy had the greatest success in Venice. The declamations with which it abounded, were not in the taste of good comedy, but Darbes could not possibly have been more at his ease in displaying the superiority of his talents in the different shades which he had to express. Nothing more was necessary to procure him the general character of the most accomplished actor then on the stage.

But to establish his reputation still more, it was necessary to exhibit him in a situation where he could shine with his countenance unmasked. This was my project, and the principal aim I had in view. While Darbes was in the enjoyment of the applause he derived from his Prudent Man, I laboured at a piece for him, intitled the *Venetian Twins*.

I had had sufficient time and opportunities to

examine into the different personal characters of my actors. In Darbes I perceived two opposite and habitual movements in his figure and his actions. At one time, he was the gayest, the most brilliant, and lively man in the world; and at another, he assumed the air, the manners, and conversation of a simpleton and a blockhead. These changes took place quite naturally and without reflection.

This discovery suggested to me the idea of making him appear under these different aspects in the same play.

The play was extolled to the very skies. The incomparable acting of Darbes contributed infinitely to its success. His glory and his joy were at their height. The director was not less pleased to witness the complete success of his undertaking, and I had my share also in the general satisfaction in seeing myself caressed and applauded a great deal more than I deserved.

I had given three new pieces since my return to Venice without having my tranquillity disturbed by any criticism; but during the Christmas holidays, when those who had no employment were deprived of the amusement of the theatres, several pamphlets against the authors and the players made their appearance. Nothing was said against my unsuccessful piece. Here the criticisms fell rather on my country than on my work; for it was said to be good, but too true and too keen, and all that I was blamed for was the bringing it out at Venice.

With respect to the two others, it was observed that there was as much cunning as prudence in the conduct of the Prudent Man; and the character of Pancrace in the Venetian Twins. These criticisms were sometimes unfounded and sometimes correct, and the pungency of some of the observations was compensated by the praise and the encouragement contained in others. Upon the whole, I had no reason to be dissatisfied.

It was the company of Medebac which was principally aimed at. They called it the *Company of Rope-Dancers;* and these expressions were the more malicious, as they had some sort of truth for their foundation.

Madam Medebac was the daughter of a rope-dancer. The uncle who acted *Brighella* had been merry Andrew; and Darbes was married to the sister-in-law of the principal of these tumblers.

This family however, though educated in a perilous and disreputable situation, were most exemplary in their morals, and were no wise defective in point of education.

Medebac, who was a good actor and the friend and countryman of these people, observing that several of them possessed talents for comedy advised them to change their situation. To this they agreed, and Medebac took upon himself to form them. The new actors made the most rapid progress under him, and in a short time were enabled

to make head against the oldest and most respectable companies in Italy.

Was it fair to reproach this company, which had always behaved most respectably, and now had attained great proficiency, with their former profession? This was pure malice, and proceeded from the jealousy of their rivals. They were dreaded by the other theatres of Venice, who, unable to ruin them, were mean enough to treat them with contempt.

When I first saw these comedians at Leghorn, I was as much attached to them on account of their talents, as their conduct; and I endeavoured to raise them, through their own care and my efforts, to that degree of consideration which they every way merited.

But all these efforts of the enemies of Medebac were vain. The comedians gained every day a firmer footing; and the play which I am about to mention, completely established their credit, and enabled them to enjoy the most perfect tranquillity.

We opened the Carnival of the year 1748, by the *Vedova Scaltra,* the Cunning Widow.

Several of my plays had been very fortunate, but none of them equalled this. It had thirty successive representations; and was every where represented with the same success. The commencement of my reformation could not be more bril-

liant. I had another play still to give for the Carnival. It was of importance that the close of it should not disappoint the expectations which the success of the beginning of the year gave rise to. I hit upon a work perfectly calculated to crown my labours.

I had seen at the theatre of Saint Luke, a piece called *Le Putte de Castello* (The Girls of the Quarter of the Castle). This was a popular comedy, the principal subject of which was a Venetian girl without talents, morals, or address.

The work made its appearance before the theatres were placed under the controul of a censor. Character, plot and dialogue, every thing was faulty, every thing was dangerous. It was a national comedy however. It amused the public, and served to draw crowds, who laughed at the misapplied jokes.

I was so much pleased with the public who began to prefer comedy to farce, and decency to scurrility, that, to prevent the mischief which this piece was calculated to produce in minds yet undecided, I gave one in the same style, but repectable and instructive, which I called *La Putta Onorata* (the respectable Girl,) and which was calculated to prove an antidote to the poison of the *Girls of the Quarter of the Castle.*

In some of the scenes of this comedy, I painted

the Venetian gondoliers from nature in a very entertaining manner to those who are acquainted with the language and manners of my country.

I wished to be reconciled to this class of dometics who were deserving of some attention, and who were discontented with me.

The gondoliers at Venice are allowed a place in the theatre, when the pit is not full; but as they could not enter at my comedies, they were forced to wait for their masters in the streets, or in their gondolas. I had heard them myself distinguish me with very droll and comical epithets; and having procured them a few places in the corners of the house, they were quite delighted to see themselves brought on the stage, and I became their friend.

The piece had all the success which I could desire. It was impossible to conclude the season with greater brilliancy. My reform was now far advanced. What a happiness and pleasure for me!

While I worked on the old plots of the Italian comedy, and only gave pieces partly written and partly sketched, I was allowed the peaceable enjoyment of the applause of the pit; but when I announced myself for an author, an inventor, and a poet, the minds of men awoke from their lethargy, and I was supposed worthy of their attention and their criticisms.

My countrymen, so long accustomed to trivial

farces and gigantic representations, became all at once the most rigid censors of my productions. The names of *Aristotle*, *Horace*, and *Castelvetro*, were re-echoed in every circle, and my works became the subject of the conversation of the day.

I might be excused from mentioning, at this distance of time, those verbal disputes, fleeting as the wind, which were soon stifled by my successes; but I am not displeased to have an opportunity of adverting to them for the purpose of informing my readers of my mode of thinking with respect to the rules of comedy, and of the method I laid down in carrying them into execution.

The unities requisite for the perfection of theatrical works have in all times been the subject of discussion among authors and amateurs.

The censors of my plays of character had nothing to reproach me with, in respect to the unity of action and of time; but they maintained that in the unity of place I had been deficient.

The action of my comedies was always confined to the same town; and the characters never departed from it. It is true, they went from one place to another; but all these places were within the same walls; and I was then and am still of opinion, that in this manner the unity of place was sufficiently observed.

In every art and every discovery, experience has always preceded precepts. In the course of time, a method has been assigned by writers to the

practice of the invention, but modern authors have always possessed the right of putting an interpretation on the ancients.

For my part, not finding, either in the poetics of Aristotle or Horace, a clear and absolute precept founded on reason for the rigorous unity of place, I have always adhered to it when my subject seemed to me susceptible of it: but I could never induce myself to sacrifice a good comedy for the sake of a prejudice which might have rendered it bad.

The Italians would never have been so rigidly disposed towards me, especially in the case of my first productions, had they not been provoked by the injudicious zeal of my partisans.

They extolled my pieces greatly beyond their merit, and well-informed people only condemned their fanaticism.

The disputes grew more and more warm on the subject of my last piece. My champions maintained that the *Putta Onorata* was a faultless comedy, and the rigorists maintained that the *Protagonist* was injudiciously chosen.

I ask pardon of my readers for making here use of a Greek word, which ought to be known, but which is very little used. It is not to be found in any dictionary that I know of; but it has been frequently used by celebrated authors of my country. The term *Protagonist* is employed by *Castelvetro, Crescimbeni, Gravina, Quadrio, Muratori,*

Maffei, Metastasio, and many others, to signify the principal subject of the piece. The utility of this Greek word, which comprises the meaning of six words in one, is evident; and I request permission to avail myself of it for the purpose of avoiding the monotony of a phrase which in the course of my work, might at length become wearisome.

It was said that the character of the *Protagonist* was ill-chosen, because it was selected from the class of vicious or ridiculous characters.

The respectable Girl, on the other hand, was virtuous and interesting from her morals, her mildness, and her position, and I had failed, it was said, in the object of my comedy, which is, to hold vice up to abhorrence, and to correct failings. My censors were in the right; but I was not in the wrong.

My object was to begin by flattering the country for which I was employed, and the subject was new, agreeable, and national. I proposed a model to my spectators for their imitation. If we succeed in inspiring a love of probity, is it not better to endeavour to gain hearts by the charms of virtue than by the horror of vice?

In speaking of virtue, I do not mean a heroical virtue, affecting from its distresses, and pathetic from its diction. Those works, which in French are called *dramas,* have certainly their merit; they are a species of theatrical representation between

tragedy and comedy, and an additional subject of entertainment for feeling hearts. The misfortunes of the heroes of tragedy interest us at a distance, but those of our equals are calculated to affect us more closely.

Comedy, which is an imitation of nature, ought not to reject virtuous and pathetic sentiments, if the essential object be observed of enlivening it with those comic and prominent traits which constitute the very foundation of its existence.

Far be it from me to indulge the foolish presupmtion of setting up for a preceptor. I merely wish to impart to my readers the little I have learned, and have myself done; and in the most contemptible books we always find something deserving of attention.

I shall conclude this chapter with some observations on the Venetian dialect, which I used in the comedy of the *Putta Onorata,* and in several other plays.

The Venetian language is undoubtedly the mildest and most agreeable of all the dialects of Italy; its pronunciation is clear, delicate, and easy, its words abundant and expressive, and its phrases harmonious and ingenious; and as the character of the Venetian nation is distinguished for gaiety, their language is in the same manner distinguished for lightness and pleasantry.

This does not prevent the language from being susceptible of treating in an elevated manner the

most grave and interesting subjects. The advocates plead in Venetian, and the harangues of the senators are delivered in the same idiom; but without derogating from the majesty of the throne or the dignity of the bar, our orators possess a happy faculty of associating the most agreeable and interesting graces with the most sublime eloquence.

I endeavoured to give an idea of the nervous and brilliant style of my countrymen in the comedy of the Venetian advocate. This piece was received, listened to, and relished every where, and was even translated into French. The success of my first Venetian plays encouraged me to compose others. There is a considesable number of them in my collection; and as they do me perhaps the greatest honour, I shall cautiously abstain from touching them.

I gave, and shall always continue to give, in my editions, the explanation of the most difficult words for the sake of strangers; and with a slight knowledge of the Italian language, the Venetian without much difficulty will be as intelligible as the Tuscan.

The *Putta Onorata* with which the season of 1748 was closed, was resumed the following year, and still received with the same applause. It was withdrawn to make way for the first representation of *La Buona Moglie*, the good Wife.

This was another fortunate piece, the principal

subject of which was taken from the lower orders. I looked every where for nature, and that which furnished me with virtuous models and traits of good moral conduct was always pleasing in my eyes.

But the following was in high comedy: *Il Cavaliere & La Dama;* the Gentleman and Lady of Quality.

I had long looked with astonishment on these singular beings called *Cicisbeos* in Italy, the martyrs of gallantry, and the slaves of the caprices of the fair sex.

This piece was principally levelled at them, but I durst not venture a direct attack upon the *Cicisbeo* system, for fear of stirring up against me the numerous society of gallants, and I concealed the satire under the cloak of two virtuous persons, whose situation was a strong contrast to that of the gallants in question.

This comedy was very much applauded, it had fifteen successive representations, and we closed the autumn with it.

CHAP. XX.

The Cunning Widow brought forward again—Critical and satirical Parody of this Piece—My Apology—My Triumph—Introduction of a dramatic Censor—The Fortunate Heiress, a Comedy of three Acts in prose—Its Failure—Darbes leaves us—My Engagement with the Public—Discovery of a new Pantaloon—The Comic Theatre, a Piece of three Acts, in prose—The Coffee-house, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—Its Success—The Liar, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose; an Imitation of the Menteur *of Corneilli—The Flatterer, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—The Family of the Antiquarian, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—Translation of this Work by a French Author.*

Of all my pieces the *Vedova Scaltra* was the most fortunate; but it also underwent the most severe and dangerous criticisms.

My adversaries, or those of my comedians, made an attempt which would have ruined all of us, if I had not been courageous enough to step forward in defence of the common cause.

At the third representation of the second season of this piece, the play-bills of Saint Samuel announced a new comedy, called *The School for Widows.*

I was told that it was a parody of my piece, but it was no such thing, it was my widow herself, with the same plot and the same incidents.

Nothing was changed but the dialogue, which was filled with insulting invectives against me and my comedians.

One actor uttered a few phrases of my original, another added *silly stuff*. Some of the bon-mots and pleasantries of my piece were repeated, and a cry was set up in chorus of *stupid! stupid!*

This work cost no trouble to the author who had merely followed my plan, and whose style was not superior to my own: applause however burst forth from every quarter, and the sarcasms and satirical traits were received with laughter, cries of *bravo*, and reiterated clapping of hands. I was in my box, covered with my mask. I kept silence, and called the public ungrateful; but I was in the wrong; for this inimical public was none of mine.

Three-fourths of the spectators were composed of people who had an interest in my ruin; for Medebac and myself had to struggle against six other theatres in the same city. Each of them had its several friends and adherents; and those who were not interested, were amused with the scandal.

I instantly formed my resolution. I had resolved to answer no criticisms; but I might have been reproached with cowardice, had I not attempted to stop the torrent which then threatened to overwhelm me.

I returned home, and gave orders to my family to sup and retire to bed, and leave me to myself. I immediately shut myself up in my closet, and

seized my pen in dudgeon, which I did not quit till I imagined myself avenged. I put my apology into action, and composed a dialogue with three characters, under the title of *Apologetical Prologue of the Cunning Widow.*

I did not dwell on the stupidity of the work of my enemies. My first endeavour was to point out the dangerous abuse of theatrical liberty, and the necessity of a police to preserve decency in theatres.

I had remarked in this wicked parody certain expressions which could not but shock the delicacy of the republic with respect to strangers. The people of Venice, for example, use the word *panimbruo* by way of insult to protestants. It is a vague word, somewhat like that of Huguenot in France; and the gondolier of *my lord*, in the School for Widows, thought proper to call his master *Panimbruo.* The other strangers were not treated with more ceremony; and I was sure that my observations could not fail to effect the object which I had in view.

After advocating the interest of civil society, I defended my own cause, and set forth the injustice which I had experienced. I opposed reason to satire, and answered insults by decent reflections. On the completion of my work, I did not present it to government. I avoided every thing like the conflict of jurisdictions and protections. I therefore sent my pamphlet to the press, and addressed my complaints to the public.

I could not conceal my project, which was known and dreaded, and every means was resorted to, to prevent its execution.

Medebac had a protector in the first order of the nobility and in the first offices of state, who ought to have favoured me; but he was afraid lest my temerity should occasion my own ruin and that of his protegé. He did me the honour to visit me, and advised me at first to withdraw my prologue, but when he saw that I was determined, he informed me that I ran the risk of displeasing the Supreme Tribunal to which the police of the state is entrusted.

I was however firm in my resolution and not to be shaken by any thing; and I told his excellence very frankly, that my work was in the press; that my printer was known; and that the government might seize my manuscript if it thought proper; but that, if this were attempted, I should instantly set out to have it printed in another country.

This nobleman was astonished at my firmness. He knew me; he was kind enough to rely on me; he took me by the hand with an air of confidence, and left me to prosecute my wishes.

The day following, my pamphlet made its appearance. Three thousand copies were thrown off, and I gave orders for their distribution *gratis* at all the coffee-houses, theatres, and other places of assembly, and to my friends, protectors, and acquaintance.

The *School for Widows* was instantly suppressed, and, two days afterwards, an order was issued by the government for the licence of theatrical productions. My *Cunning Widow* was more applauded, and drew greater crowds than ever; our enemies were humbled, and we redoubled our zeal and activity.

If my reader should be curious to know the author of the School for Widows, I cannot satisfy him. I shall never name those whose intentions have been directed to ruin me.

The termination of the Carnival of 1749, was approaching. We went on admirably, and had the advantage over all the other theatres; but, after the battles which we had gained, something brilliant was requisite to crown my year.

The malice of my enemies had given me too much occupation to allow me to execute the project of a brilliant close, which I had sketched. I found a comedy in my port-folio which by no means satisfied me, and which I was therefore unwilling to hazard. I should have wished the remainder of the Carnival filled up with old plays; but Medebac told me, that, as we had only given two new plays in the course of the year, and as the public which seemed satisfied with the defence of the Cunning Widow would not perhaps be equally disposed to pardon us for our want of novelty, it would be absolutely necessary to obviate this reproach by closing with a new comedy.

To these suggestions, which were not without foundation, I at once yielded. I gave the *Fortunate Heiress*, a comedy in three acts and in prose. It fell, however, as I had foreseen; and as the public easily forget those who have contributed to their amusement, and never pardon those who have wearied them, we were on the point of closing our theatre under very unpleasant circumstances.

Another event of a much more disagreeable nature and much more dangerous consequences happened to disturb our repose at the same time.

Darbes, who was an excellent actor and one of the pillars of the company, was demanded from the Republic of Venice by the Saxon minister for the service of the King of Poland. He had to set out instantly, and quitted us abruptly to prepare for his journey.

Medebac's loss was the greater, as we knew of no person capable of supplying his place, and the boxes for the ensuing year began to be thrown up.

Piqued at the ill-humour of the public, and presuming something on my own worth, in the closing address delivered by the principal actress, I promised, in very indifferent verses, but very distinctly and positively, that, next year, I would bring out sixteen new pieces.

When I entered into this engagement, I had not a single subject in my head. However, there was no alternative but keeping my word, or destruction. My friends trembled for me, my enemies

smiled; I comforted the former, and laughed in my turn at the others. You will see how I extricated myself.

This was a terrible year for me, and the remembrance of it still makes my flesh creep. Sixteen comedies of three acts each, and each act filling up, according to the custom of Italy, two hours and a half of representation.

But what alarmed me the most was the difficulty of finding an actor equal in point of ability and agreeable qualities to the one we had lost.

Every endeavour was used by Medebac and myself to discover a suitable person on the continent of Italy; and at length we found out a young man who played the character in which we were deficient in strolling companies with applause.

We brought him to Venice for trial. He acquitted himself very well with his mask, and still better with his countenance uncovered. His voice and figure were good, and he sang delightfully. This was Antonio Mattiuzzi, called Collalto, of the city of Vicenza.

This man, who had received a good education, and was not deficient in abilities, only knew the old comedies of intrigue, and required to be instructed in the new kind introduced by me.

I attached myself to him, and took him under my care. He placed an implicit reliance on me. His docility pleased me more and more; and I followed the company to Bologna and Mantua,

for the sake of completing the formation of my new actor, who had become my friend.

During the five months which we passed in these two cities of Lombardy, I did not lose my time, but continued labouring night and day, and we returned towards the commencement of autumn to Venice, where we were expected with great impatience.

We opened the theatre with a piece intitled *Il Teatro Comico,* The Comic Theatre. I had announced it as a comedy in three acts, but in reality it was only a piece of poetry thrown into action, and divided into three parts.

It was my intention, in composing this work, to place it at the head of a new edition of my theatre; but I was pleased to have also an opportunity of instructing those who are not fond of reading, and engaging them to listen to maxims and corrections from the stage, which would have wearied them in a book.

The place in this comedy is never changed; it is the theatre where the comedians were to assemble to rehearse another piece, intitled *The Father Rival of his Son.*

The piece finished with applause. I have not time to mention the compliments of my friends and the astonishment of my enemies. My object at present is not to boast of my projects, but to state the manner in which they were carried into execution.

A few days afterwards, we gave the first representation of the *Donne Pontigliose* or the *Punctilious Ladies.*

I composed this comedy during my residence at Mantua, and it was acted in the theatre of that town by way of trial. It was received with great pleasure, but I ran the risk of drawing on myself the indignation of one of the first ladies of the country, who, a short time before, had been in the situation of one of the females of the piece. Every one fixed their eyes on her box; but, fortunately for me, she possessed too much good sense to give any furtherance to the malice of the evil-disposed, and warmly applauded all the passages which could bear an application to her.

The same thing happened afterwards to me at Florence and Verona; and in each of these cities it was believed that I had taken the subject of my play from among them. This is an evident proof that nature is every-where the same, and that, if we consult her, we shall never fail in our characters.

This piece was not so fortunate at Venice as elsewhere, and that for very good reasons. The wives of the patricians are in a situation which secures them from having their pre-eminence called in question at home; and they are unacquainted with the punctilios of the provinces.

I had taken this piece from the class of nobles, but the following from the middle class. It was,

in Italian, *La Bottega di Cafe*, the Coffee-House, and it had a very brilliant success. The assemblage and contrast of the characters could not fail to please. That of the back-biter was applied to several well-known individuals. One of them vowed vengeance against me, and I was threatened with swords, knives, and pistols; but, curious perhaps to see sixteen new plays in one year, they gave me time to finish them.

At a time when I was looking out for subjects of comedy every where, I recollected having seen the *Liar* of Corneille, translated into Italian, represented at Florence in a private theatre; and as a piece which we have seen acted is more easily retained, I remembered very distinctly those places with which I had been the most struck. I recollect having said, when I saw it, "This is a good comedy, but the character of the Liar is susceptible of a much greater degree of comic humour."

As I had not much time to hesitate respecting the choice of my subjects, I fixed on this; and my imagination, which was then very quick and ready, instantly furnished me with such an abundance of matter for comedy, that I was tempted to create a new Liar.

But I rejected my project. To Corneille I was indebted for the first idea, and I respected my master, and considered it an honour to work after him; adding, however, what seemed necessary for the taste of my nation, and for the success of my

piece, which had all the applause I could possibly desire.

The subject of a liar, which was less vicious than comic, suggested another to me of a more wicked and dangerous nature; I mean the flatterer.

Rousseau's was unsuccessful in France, but mine was very well received in Italy; for this reason: the French poet treated the subject more as a philosopher than a comic author; whereas, I endeavoured, in inspiring horror for the vice, to enliven at the same time the piece by comic episodes and prominent traits.

The following comedy is altogether different in kind from the preceding; for it is taken from among the class of the ridiculous; an alternation which is not without its use in the production of several works.

The *Famiglia del l'Antiquario*, The Antiquary's House, was the sixth of the sixteen projected plays.

I called it at first merely the Antiquary from the *Pròtagonist*; but, fearful lest the disputes between his wife and daughter-in-law should produce a double interest, I gave a title to the comedy which embraced the whole at once, especially as the failings of the two wives, and that of the head of the family, set off one another, and contributed equally to the humour and the morality of the work.

The word *antiquarian* is equally applied in

Italy to those who devote their learning to the study of antiquity, and those who pick up, without knowledge, copies for originals, and trifles for precious monuments. I took my subject from among the latter.

I saw a French translation of this piece by M. Collet, secretary to the Infanta, represented several years afterwards at Parma. This estimable author, well known at Paris by his charming productions for the French theatre, succeeded in giving an excellent translation of my piece, and its favourable reception was undoubtedly in a great measure to be attributed to him.

But he changed the conclusion, from an idea that the piece did not finish happily, in allowing the mother and daughter-in-law to separate on bad terms with each other, and he therefore reconciled them on the stage. This reconciliation would be very desirable, if it could be solid; but who can be certain that these two inveterate ladies would not renew their disputes again next day.

I may be mistaken, but I believe my conclusion to be the natural.

CHAP. XXI.

Pamela, a Comedy of three Acts in prose, and without Masks—The Man of Taste, a Comedy in three Acts in prose—Its indifferent Success—The Gamester, a Piece in three Acts—Its Failure—Prohibition of Games of Hazard, and suppression of the Ridotto at Venice—A short Libel of my Enemies—The true Friend, a Piece in three Acts, without Masks—Its Success—The Imaginary Valetudinary, a Piece in three Acts—Its Success—The Prudent Wife, a Piece in three Acts, without Masks—A few Words respecting that Piece—Its Success—The Incognita, a Romantic Comedy in three Acts, in prose—The Honourable Adventurer, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—Reference it bears to the Author's Case—The Capricious Wife, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—The Babblers, a Comedy of three Acts, in prose—Success of these four Pieces—My Engagement fulfilled—Public Satisfaction.

For some time, the novel of Pamela had been the delight of the Italians, and my friends urged me strongly to turn it into a comedy.

I was acquainted with the work; and felt no difficulty in seizing the spirit of it, and approximating the objects; but the moral aim of the English author was not reconcileable with the manners and laws of my country.

A nobleman in London does not derogate from his nobility in marrying a peasant; but at Venice, a patrician who should marry a plebeian, would

deprive his children of the patrician nobility, and they would lose their right to the sovereignty.

Comedy, which is, or ought to be, a school for propriety, should only expose human weaknesses for the sake of correcting them; and it would be unjustifiable to hazard the sacrifice of an unfortunate posterity under the pretext of recompensing virtue.

I renounced, therefore, the charm of this novel, but necessitated as I then was to multiply my subjects, and surrounded both at Mantua and Venice by persons who instigated me to labour upon it, I willingly consented.

I did not however begin the work till I had invented a denouement which, instead of being dangerous, might serve as a model to virtuous lovers, and render the catastrophe both more agreeable and more interesting.

The comedy of Pamela is a drama, according to the French definition; but the public found it interesting and amusing, and, of all my works yet given, it was the most successful.

After a sentimental piece, I gave one founded on the usages of civil society, under the title of *Il Cavaliere di buon gusto*, which might be translated, in French, *l'Homme de Gout*, the Man of Taste.

This title, it is true, would in France announce a person acquainted with the sciences and fine arts; whereas the Italian of *good taste*, whom I paint in

my piece, is a man who, with a moderate fortune, contrives to possess a charming house, select servants, an excellent cook, and shines in society as an affluent individual, without injuring any one or deranging his affairs.

There are curious individuals in the piece anxious to conjecture his secret, and slanderers who attack his fame; and the latter are of the number of those who frequent his table, and profit by his generosity.

This piece succeeded tolerably well, but it was its misfortune to follow Pamela, which had turned every body's head. It was more fortunate when resumed the following year.

The same thing happened to the *Gamester*, which was the ninth comedy of my engagement; but as it did not rise again like the other, I myself coincided with the public in regarding it as a piece condemned without remedy.

In the comedy of the Coffee-House, the third piece of this year, I had very happily introduced a gamester, and the character was acted by our new pantaloon, without a mask, in a very agreeable and interesting manner. Believing that I had not then said enough on the subject of this unfortunate passion, I proposed to treat the matter more thoroughly; but the episodical gamester of the Coffee-House had the advantge of the one which was the principal subject of the piece.

I may be allowed also to add, that all sorts of

games of hazard were then tolerated at Venice; and that the famous Ridotto, which enriched some and ruined others, but which drew gamesters from the four quarters of the world, and threw money into circulation, was then also in existence.

It was unadvised in me therefore to lay open the consequences of this dangerous amusement, and still more the tricks of certain gamblers, and the artifices of the brokers; and in a city of two hundred thousand souls, my piece could not fail to have a number of enemies.

The republic of Venice has since prohibited games of hazard, and suppressed the Ridotto. This suppression may be complained of by certain individuals; but to prove the wisdom of this measure, it is only necessary to state that those very members of the *grand council* who are fond of gaming, gave their voices in favour of the new law.

I do not state this with a view to excuse the failure of my piece by arguments foreign to the subject. It fell, and consequently it was bad; and it is no small matter for me, that of sixteen comedies it was the only one which failed.

The public called out for Pamela; but I refused to gratify the wish. I was jealous of fulfilling my engagement, and I had still seven new pieces to give.

I was well aware that my partisans would have excused me some of them, for the pleasure of again seeing that with which they had been so much amused; but I should have been insulted by the

ill-disposed, and I preferred the glory of confounding my adversaries, to the pleasure of gratifying my friends. I was almost certain of the success of the comedy which I was about to give; I announced it with confidence; and my expectations were not deceived.

The quantity of pieces given by me one after another, did not leave my enemies time to give vent to their malice against me. But during the ten days of relaxation on account of the Christmas holidays, I was regaled by them with a pamphlet more remarkable for its abuse than its criticism.

After the failure of my last piece, it was said that Goldoni's fire was exhausted; that he began to decline; that he would end badly, and that his pride would be humbled. This last expression alone gave me any displeasure. I might be accused of imprudence in having contracted an engagement which might cost me the loss of my health, or that of my reputation; but as to pride, I never possessed any, or at least I could never perceive it.

I treated this libel with contempt; but I was more and more convinced of the necessity of re-establishing the interest, gaiety, instruction, and the old credit of my theatre.

All these views were fulfilled in the comedy of the *True Friend*, which was announced at the opening of the Carnival. I derived the plot from a historical anecdote, and I treated it with all the delicacy the subject demanded.

This is one of my favourite plays; and I had

the pleasure of seeing the public of the same opinion with myself: and indeed I was astonished that I could bestow the necessary time and care on it in so laborious a year for me.

But the *Finta Ammalata*, the Imaginary Valetudinary, by which it was followed, cost me no less trouble, and was attended with equal success.

Madam Medebac, who furnished me with the subject of it, was an excellent actress, strongly attached to her profession, but she was subject to fits of *ennui;* she was often ill, often imagined herself so, and sometimes nothing ailed her but her fits, which she had at her command.

In this last case, we had only to propose giving a fine character to a subaltern actress, and she recovered instantly.

I took the liberty of drawing Madam Medebac herself; she partly saw it, but as she found the part charming, she accepted it, and represented it admirably.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of the subject, this piece was generally well received, and extremely applauded. Perhaps it owed its success to the actress, who took a pleasure in playing her own character, and exhibited it without the smallest effort or constraint. The physicians of different characters, and a deaf *quidnunc* of an apothecary, who mistook every thing that was said to him, and preferred the reading of gazettes to that of prescriptions, contributed no less to the success.

The *Finta Ammalata* owed its good fortune to its humour and gaiety; but *la Donna Prudente*, the Prudent Woman, succeeded from the interest of the plot alone.

I derived the subject from the same source with that of the *Cavalier e la Dama*, namely, the Class of Cicisbeos.

In Italy, there are husbands who willingly tolerate the gallants of their wives, and who even become their confidants; but there are others extremely jealous, who bear the strongest ill-will to those singular beings who are the second masters in an ill-regulated family.

The public seemed tolerably well pleased with the piece, which finished with applause, and kept its ground very happily till it was succeeded by another.

After the comedy of Pamela, and more especially during the equivocal success of the Man of Taste, and the failure of the Gamester, my friends absolutely insisted that I should give another play borrowed from some novel, that I might, as they said, spare myself the trouble of invention.

Wearied with their solicitations, I at last told them, that, instead of reading a novel for the sake of composing a play, I should prefer composing a piece from which a novel might be made.

Some began to laugh, and others took me at my word. "Give us then," said they, a novel in action; a piece as full of plot as a novel."—"I will

do so."—"In earnest?"—"Yes, in earnest."—"On your honour?"—"On my honour."

I returned home, and, warm with my promise, I began the play and the novel at the same time, without having the subject of either the one or the other.

"I must," said I to myself, "have a great deal of intrigue; I must surprise and astonish, and at the same time excite an interest; I must have the comic combined with the pathetic. A heroine would excite a stronger interest than a hero; but where shall I seek her? We shall see: but in the mean time, let us adopt an unknown lady for protagonist:" and I immediately wrote down on my paper, *l'Incognita*, a comedy; act first, scene first. "This woman should have a name, let us give her that of *Rosaura*; but is she to make her appearance alone, to give the first account of the argument of the play? No; that is the fault of the ancient comedies; we must make her enter with...Yes, with Florindo...Rosaura and Florindo.

In this way I began the *Incognita*, and continued it in the same manner, constructing a vast edifice without knowing whether it would turn out a temple or an exchange.

Each scene produced another: one event gave birth to four; and at the end of this first act the picture was sketched, and required nothing but to be filled up.

I was myself astonished at the quantity and novelty of the anecdotes with which my imagination supplied me.

At the end of the second act, I began to think of the denouement, and to prepare something which, while it was unexpected, should not appear to fall from the clouds.

My friends were satisfied, and so were the public; and every body owned that my piece might have furnished sufficient materials for a novel of four large volumes, octavo.

On quitting a romantic piece, I fell upon another subject, which, without being marvellous, might, on account of its singular combinations, be classed with *Tom Jones*, *Joe Thompson*, and *Robinson Crusoe*.

The protagonist, however, had a historical foundation; for, if the *Honourable Adventurer*, from whom the title of this piece is taken, is not my portrait, he has at least gone through as many adventures, and exercised as many professions as myself; and as the public, in applauding this piece, were kind enough to appropriate to me anecdotes and maxims honourable to my character; I could not conceal that I had myself in view when composing it.

Whether, however, my work was historical or fabulous, it was very favourably received. The Honourable Adventurer had a decided and uni-

form success, and I enjoyed at the same time the good fortune of the piece and the honour of the allegory.

But it became necessary to leave these sentimental pieces, and return to character and true comedy; and more particularly as the end of the Carnival was approaching, and the theatre required to be enlivened and brought to the level of every body.

The *Donna Volubile (the Capricious Lady)* was the last but one of the season. We had an actress in the company, the most capricious woman in the world, whom I merely copied; and Madam Medebac, who knew the original, was not sorry, with all her goodness, to have an opportunity of laughing a little at her companion.

This character is in itself comical, but, if not supported by interesting and agreeable situations, extremely apt to become wearisome.

We may ridicule changes in dress and entertainments, but to render a changeable woman a subject of comedy, the ridicule must arise from the caprice of her mind.

A woman who is in love one moment, and no longer so the next, who utters maxims, and who is inflamed with a passion quite the reverse of her first way of thinking, forms a proper subject for comedy.

The winding-up of this piece is suitable to the folly which is proposed to be corrected. Rosaura

decides at length for marriage, but every body shuns her and refuses to have her.

Madam Medebac played the character admirably. Her natural mildness was excellently adapted to the silliness of the Capricious Woman, and the piece produced all the effect which I could desire.

I had but another comedy to give, to conclude the year and fulfil my engagement.

We were at the last Sunday of the Carnival but one, and I had not written a line of this last piece, nor even imagined the subject of it.

I sallied out of my house that day, and, by way of recreation, repaired to the square of Saint Mark. I looked round me to see if any of the masks or jugglers might furnish me with the subject of a comedy, or some sort of spectacle for Shrove-tide.

I observed under the arcade of the clock, a man with whom I was instantly struck, and who furnished me the subject I was in quest of. This was an old Arminian, ill-dressed, very dirty, and with a long beard, who ran about the streets of Venice, selling the dried fruits of his country, which he called *Abagigi*.

This man, who was to be found every where, and whom I had myself so frequently met, was so well known and so much despised, that when any one wished to laugh at a girl desirous of a husband, he proposed to her *Abagigi* in derision.

This was enough to send me home satisfied.

On entering my house, I shut myself up in my closet, and began a low comedy, which I called *i Pettigolezzi*, the Gossips.

Under this title it has been translated into French by M. Riccoboni the younger, and represented at the Italian theatre in Paris. The translator very properly changed the character of Abagigi, which was unknown in France, into that of a Jew dealer in spectacles; but neither the French Jew nor the Italian Arminian is the *protagonist*, and they are only serviceable in carrying forward the plot of the piece which succeeded in both languages.

I could only give it on Shrove Tuesday for the first time, and with it we closed the Carnival. The concourse was so extraordinary that day that the price of boxes was tripled and quadrupled, and the applause was so tumultuous, that the passengers were in doubt whether they were the expression of satisfaction or a general disapprobation.

I was seated very tranquilly in my box, surrounded by my friends, who wept for joy. A crowd of people came in quest of me, obliged me to leave the place, dragged and carried me in spite of all my endeavours to the *Ridotto*, exhibited me from one hall to another, and lavished a profusion of compliments on me, which I should willingly have escaped if possible.

I was too much fatigued to support such a cere-

mony; besides, as I was ignorant of the origin of this enthusiasm of the moment, I was displeased to think that this piece should be preferred to so many others of which I was more fond.

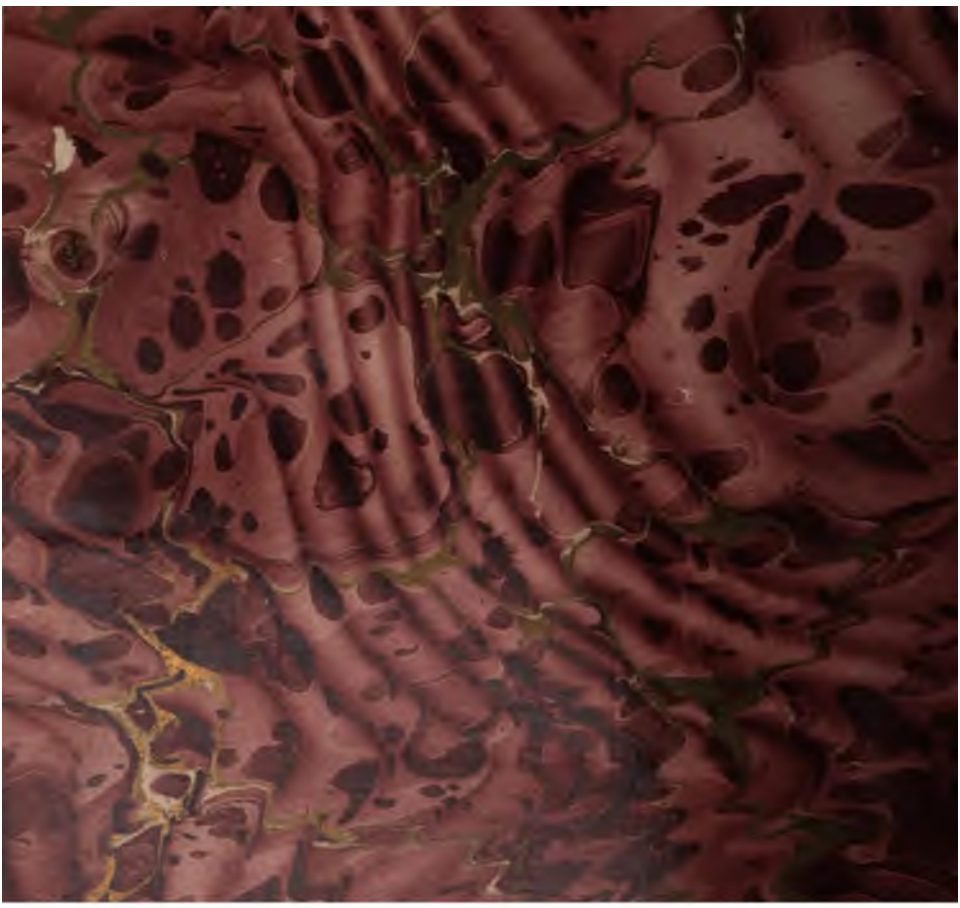
But I soon discerned the true motive of this general acclamation. It was the triumph of the fulfilment of my engagement.

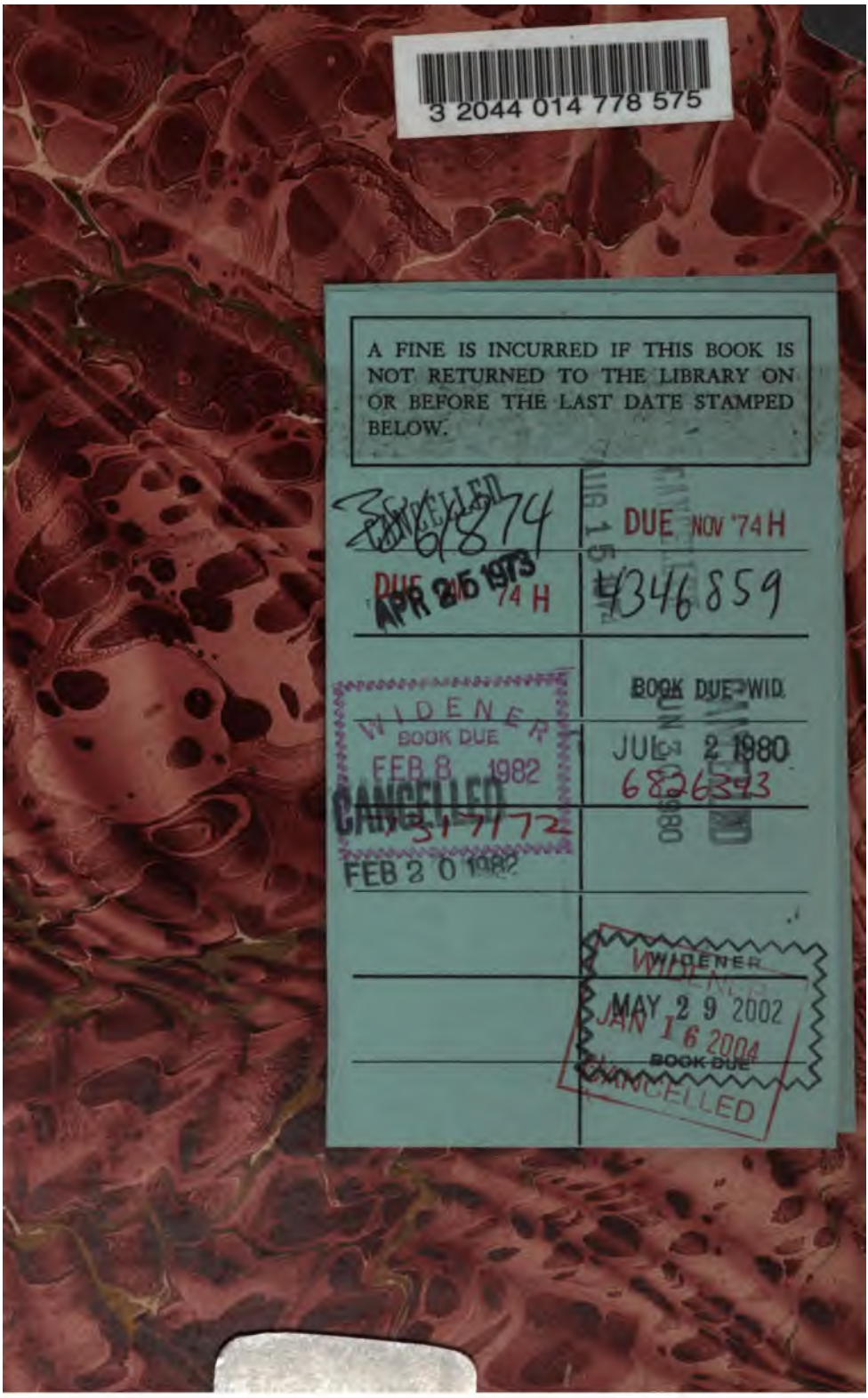
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